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A. R. Colquhoun

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ACROSS CHRYSÊ,

BEING THE NARRATIVE OF

A JOURNEY OF EXPLORATION

THROUGH THE

SOUTH CHINA BORDER LANDS

FROM CANTON TO MANDALAY.

BY

ARCHIBALD R. COLQUHOUN,

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, INDIAN PUBLIC WORKS, F.R.G.S., A.M. INST. C.E.

WITH 3 SPECIALLY PREPARED MAPS, 30 FACSIMILES OF NATIVE DRAWINGS, AND 300 ILLUSTRATIONS,

Chiefly from Original Photographs and Sketches.

IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

I WOULD wish it to be understood that the narrative of my journey was *written on the ground*, — the plan adopted being to write up the narrative every three or four days from my diary. Whatever may be wanting in literary finish is, I hope, compensated for by the freshness and realism of the descriptions. I need hardly remind the reader of the extra labour which this involved, and of the difficulties under which it had to be accomplished.

In the narrative I have told a story of our second interpreter's ignorance regarding the illustrious traveller Marco Polo. The interpreter was entertaining a levée of village society in the south of Yünnan, when, in reply to a yokel who said that a European had been seen by him in Lin-an some ten years or so before, he replied with an air of great wisdom, "Ah, yes! That must have been Marco Polo." I little dreamt that such a blunder as post-dating the Venetian's travels six hundred years could ever have a parallel in Europe! I was mistaken. Since my return, dining at a club with several friends one evening, someone happened to mention the fascinating volumes of Ser Marco, when a

gentleman at table remarked, "Yes, you mean the man who crossed Africa two years ago!"

A similarly ill-informed friend has asked me where Chrysê is. I need hardly tell the reader that Indo-China is a very modern name, and that Chrysê represented to the ancients their vague notions of Indo-China. I am fortunate enough to be able to give the following account of Chrysê from the pen of Colonel Henry Yule, the greatest authority on the subject.

"Chrysê is a literal version of the Sanskrit Suvarnabhumi, or Golden Land, applied in ancient India to the Indo-Chinese regions. Of course, where there is no accurate knowledge, the application of terms must be vague.

"It would be difficult to define where Ptolemy's Chrysê (Chrysê Chōra aut Chrysê Chersonnesus) terminated eastward, though he appears to give the names a special application to what we call Burma and Pegu. But Ptolemy, from the nature of his work, which consisted in drawing such maps as he could, and then tabulating the positions from those maps, as if he possessed most accurate data for all, necessarily defined things far beyond what his real materials justified. If we look to the author of the 'Periplus,' who has no call to affect impossible precision, we find that Chrysê is 'the last continental region towards the East.' North of it indeed, and farther off, is Thina, i.e. China.

"Chrysê then, in the vague apprehension of the ancients,—the only appropriate apprehension, where knowledge was so indefinite,—was the region coasted

between India and China. It is most correctly rendered by 'Indo China.'"

Our survey operations have been seldom alluded to in the narrative. I may mention, however, that they were continued throughout our journey from Wu-chau (near Canton) to Tali-fu (in W. Yünnan). The plotting of the Canton river was finished during our journey, but, owing to the want of leisure since my return home, I have as yet been unable to find time for laying down the remainder. When completed, the survey will be submitted to Government and to the Royal Geographical Society.

The question of trade extension with the north of Siam, the Shan country and south-west China, will be found fully discussed in Chapters XVII. and XVIII. of the second volume. The attention of the western world is being more and more earnestly directed to this region of Indo-China. Whatever the criticism may be upon the views on this subject now put forward in these pages, the problem is one that must receive our most careful attention and to which strenuous efforts must be directed, if we are to hold our place in the international commercial contest.

The main object of my journey was to ascertain the commercial and physical aspect of south-west China and of the Shan country. Foiled in my attempt to leave China at Ssŭ-mao, I determined to execute a *reconnaissance* from British Burmah through the Shan states to the Chinese frontier. On passing through Simla I found that great interest was taken in the sub-

ject, and that the importance of the proposed exploration and survey was fully recognized by the Government of India. Since my arrival at home the commercial body has not only acknowledged the importance of opening up Indo-China to British commerce, in the manner proposed by me, but steps are already being taken by the leading Chambers of Commerce to aid me with funds towards the execution of my project.

In 1879 I was attached to the Government of India Mission to Siam and the Shan State of Zimmé. The information gained while there will be found in my book 'Amongst the Shans,' now in course of publication.

If the narrative of this exploration, after leaving the Canton river, contains comparatively little mention of Charles Wahab, who died on his way home, it is because, early on the highland part of the journey, he was struck by the disease, to which he finally succumbed, and because he was so intimately associated with me in the work, that he became identified with myself. I would wish here to testify to the pluck and patient courage which he exhibited on the journey, when suffering from the most cruel sickness. Privations, trials and anxieties were all met by him in the same spirit which prompted him to volunteer for the duty of assistant on the expedition. In his case the spirit was willing but the flesh was weak. His power of endurance was strong indeed, but had to surrender to bodily disease. Whatever credit may be due to the successful execution of the journey, and whatever its results may be, I would wish his name to be identified with my own,—as he himself

was identified in my labours,—and I trust that these pages may serve to preserve a trace of a kindly, genial, and most unselfish nature.

In conclusion, my thanks are due to Mr. J. D. Cooper, who has prepared the greater number of the drawings, and who has engraved all—and to Mr. C. E. Fripp, the artist, whose initials are found on many of the drawings, for the great interest which they have taken in the work. Finally, I am indebted to Mr. Robert Murray (of Messrs. Murray and Heath),—whose photographic apparatus I used so successfully—for the care with which he has developed the large collection of dry plates.

A. R. C.

LONDON, *2nd April*, 1883.

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EXPLANATION OF TERMS USED.

Bonze.—Buddhist priest.

Cash.—The only Chinese coin in use, made of copper or brass. It has a square hole in the centre, used for stringing it.

Chang.—Miasma.

Chau.—Town of second order.

Chen-tai.—A brigadier-general, or commandant.

Chopsticks.—Small pieces of bamboo—six or eight inches long, and as large, in section, as a penholder,—used in eating, instead of knives and forks. They are usually square, painted or unpainted. Sometimes they are made of ivory or bone. They are held in the right hand, between thumb and forefinger.

Classics.—Term applied to the writings of Confucius, Mencius and other ancient Chinese authors; also applied to the Buddhist and Taoist books.

Compradore.—Chinese head manager, or house steward.

Congee.—Rice gruel, made by boiling rice soft in water.

Coolie.—Term applied to the man who does heavy and coarse work,—such as a labourer, porter or sedan-bearer.

Cumshaw.—Present.

Fu.—Town of first order.

Fu-hong.—Coolie establishment.

Go-between.—Agent, or middle person,—either male or female,—employed for the transaction of important business.

Hong.—The building used for an office, or counting-house, or where sales and purchases are made, or where goods are stored.

Ho-tau.—Literally, "river-ferry." The class of large boats used for travelling long distances on rivers.

Hsien.—Town of fourth order.

I-chia.—Literally "savage families." Name employed by Chinese towards certain tribes.

Joss-house.—Name for temple employed by foreigners.

Li.—Chinese statute distance; varies very considerably.

"*Lily*," *or* "*Golden Lily*" *feet.*—Crushed feet.

Ma-fu.—"Horse-boy," used towards horsemen and muleteers.

Mandarin.—Name applied by foreigners to Chinese officials; also denotes the Pekin or Court language. A word unknown amongst the Chinese, said to be of Portuguese origin.

Ma-tien.—Literally, "horse-inn," stable-inn or hostelry.

Min-chia.—Literally, "native families." Name employed by Chinese towards certain tribes.

Pai-fang.—Honorary portal.

Penti-jen, or Pentis.—Literally, "natives."

Sam-shu.—Name used for Chinese distilled spirits, or whisky, made usually from rice, millet or potatoes; sometimes called *wine.*

Sedan.—A portable chair or seat, usually covered, and borne on the shoulders of two or more men, by means of poles fastened to the sides.

Sycee.—Lumps, or ingots, of silver, weighing 5, 10, 25 or 50 taels, more or less.

Tablet.—Wooden or stone monument, generally erected to the dead,—such as ancestral tablets, &c.

Tael.—1⅓ ounces of silver, value about one dollar and a third.

Tao-tai.—Intendant of Circuit, similar to the Prefect of France.

Tin-chai.—Literally, "hear orders," messenger—name by which the second interpreter is known in narrative.

T'ing.—Town of third order.

Ti-tai.—General.

Tu-ssŭ.—Aboriginal chief, or aboriginal district.

Wei-kan.—Name given to masts, or poles, erected at the doors of all official residences. Stone or wooden pillars erected to the tutelary genius as votive offerings.

Yamen.—Official court and residence of mandarins.

GENERAL MAP OF SOUTHERN ASIA.

Mr. Colquhoun's route is shewn thus ——— *The route proposed for Railway, thus* - - - - -

Stanford's Geog.l Estab.t

London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co.

ACROSS CHRYSÊ.

CHAPTER I.

Motives for journey—Usual predictions—Unusual encouragement—My companion Charles Wahab — Sir Harry Parkes — Consulate at Canton—Fishing for servants, &c.—Mr. Hewlett's kindness—Chinese yamens—Deer park—Cat Cemetery—Passenger boats—Our bargain —Intended survey.

It had long been my intention to attempt a journey through Indo-China, but it was not until towards the end of 1881 that I was enabled to carry out my purpose. My idea, the result of much careful consideration, was to take a route through Southern China (comprising the provinces of Kwang-tung, Kwang-si and Yünnan), the Shan or Laos country, lying—a sort of debatable land—between Tonquin, Burmah, Yünnan and Siam, and thence to cross into South-Eastern Burmah. The project comprised some fifteen hundred miles of exploration, of which two-thirds would be over untrodden ground, undescribed by European travellers, and the whole length would afford subjects of great interest.

My route would pass through the Anin and Caugigu of Messer Marco Polo—indeed it was the perusal of the wonderful volumes of the old Venetian traveller

that first led me strongly to desire to travel in these regions. This desire was strengthened and confirmed during a visit made to the Kiang Mai (Zimmé) Shan State, in 1879, when I was attached to the Government of India Mission, sent to Siam in that year. I then learned how rich a vein lay untouched in the matter of geography, ethnology, and other allied subjects—and also perceived that there was an object still more important, namely trade extension — and accordingly formed an intention to attempt the journey as soon as I could get the necessary leave for the undertaking.

It was not until May, 1881, that I was able to take furlough to England, after thirteen years' absence in the East, and I returned with a firm intention to make the attempt in the winter of 1881-2. With this in view, notwithstanding all the seductions of home life after a long absence, the difficulty which naturally existed in inducing relatives and friends to look on my project as anything but the veriest freak of madness, and last—but by no means least—the predictions of certain failure from "good-natured friends"—I made all due preparations.

Most kindly advice was given me by men who were authorities on the subject, namely Sir Arthur Phayre and Sir Charles Aitchison, former Chief Commissioners of Burmah, and Colonel H. Yule—who all take deep interest in Indo-China; the advice of eminent travellers —*i. e.* the late Capt. Gill, Mr. Colborne Baber, and Messrs. Cameron and McCarthy, of the China Inland Mission—was also cordially given to me. I further

gratefully add that certain members of the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce generously aided me with funds.

It had been my intention to leave England in October, but I found it impossible—owing to unforeseen circumstances—to make a start until the 8th of December, when at last I left London, *viâ* Marseilles, for China.

As the main purpose of my journey was to examine the country in reference to trade extension, to lay down a survey of my route, and to collect geographical matter, I should have been unable to effect the whole objects of the exploration single-handed. I therefore made search for a companion, amongst my acquaintances, who would bring to the task all the necessary qualities, which are by no means common! These I found in a friend, Mr. Charles Wahab, C.E., who volunteered to start within a week, and who threw himself into the undertaking heart and soul.

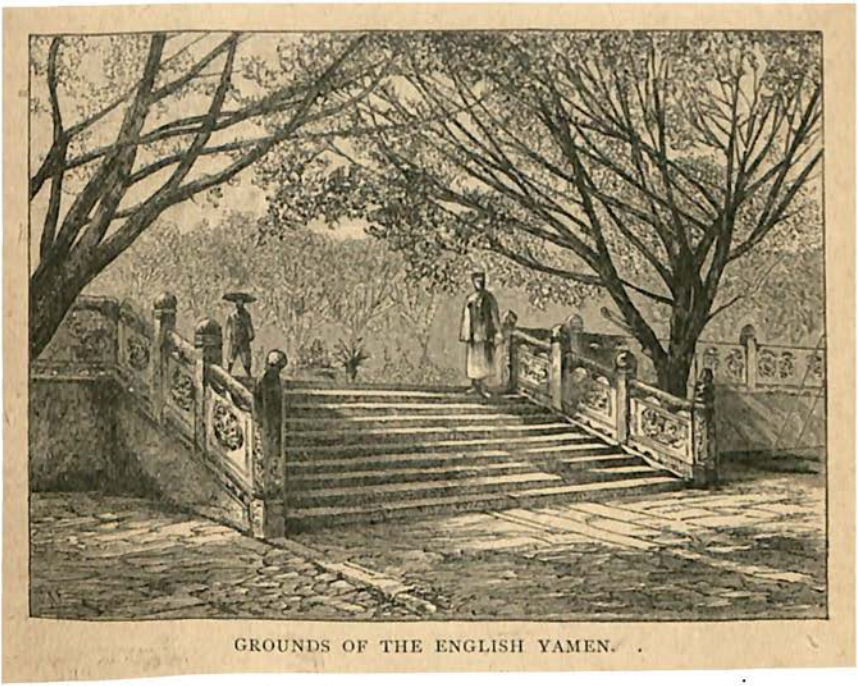
The voyage out needs no mention here, beyond saying that on the 19th of December, 1881, after a pleasant and uneventful journey by the Messageries steamer "Peï-Ho," we landed at Canton. I must here acknowledge the assistance and advice given me by Sir Harry Parkes, K.C.B., the British Minister in Japan, whose acquaintance we made as a fellow-passenger, who, from the first, evinced the most lively interest in our proposed journey, and whose kindly sympathy and generous assistance I shall not easily forget. It was encouraging to learn that Sir Harry Parkes thought so highly of the route chosen by me, and that he

understood and approved of my reasons for choosing the particular line that I had marked out.

Immediately on landing—armed with an introduction—we went to call on H.B.M.'s Consul, and on his assistant, Mr. Jordan, with whom I had already been in communication, on the subject of his joining me and of passports, interpreters and servants. On arriving, we discovered—greatly to our disappointment—that Mr. Jordan could not go, and that no suitable interpreter was to be procured either in Canton or Hong-kong. It appeared, however, from inquiries made in Shanghai on my account (through Mr. Jordan's great kindness), that the right sort of man—one possessing a knowledge of Mandarin, and an acquaintance with Cantonese and English—had been discovered in Shanghai. He wanted very long pay, but otherwise—having been on expeditions with Colonel Gordon and others—seemed in every way suitable.

My delay at home had already caused a most dangerous loss of precious time during the dry season, and, as there was now no time to lose, he was immediately telegraphed for. Inquiries were also set on foot for a cook—that most indispensable item of travel *personnel*—and a boy, or body servant, who would be willing to embark and rough it on an undertaking such as ours. This was no easy matter, we were told, and it became painfully evident to us that there was going to be difficulty over the matter. On the Consul asking us when we proposed starting, we replied, in the innocence of our hearts—"as soon as the interpreter arrives,—say a

week hence." The smile with which our reply was received was eloquent after a fashion by no means agreeable to our anticipations of an early departure. We were, however, glad to hear that there would be no difficulty about a boat. This at least was consoling. Everything had been set in train in regard to these matters, and nothing more could be done.



GROUNDS OF THE ENGLISH YAMEN.

Mr. Hewlett, the Consul, most kindly pressed me to take up my quarters with him, and I gladly availed myself of his kind offer; while my friend—there being no more room to spare at the Consul's house—made the Canton Hotel, a hostelry of a primitive sort kept by a Portuguese, his residence for the time being. Mr. Hewlett's house lies within the Chinese city, the only foreigners residing there being the French and English

Consuls, whose houses are old Chinese yamens, the designation by which the official residence and court goes.

After the occupation of Canton, these two yamens were retained with the view of placing *en évidence* the fact that the city had once been occupied by the Allied Powers. The wisdom of this practice being still retained —however judicious the step may have been in the first instance—may well be open to doubt. Any possible advantage which may be gained by the ocular evidence to the people of foreign power is not unlikely to be more than counterbalanced by a disagreeable feeling of soreness, a sort of constant friction which, it is not unnatural to expect, must be entailed on the official classes.

The English yamen is one of the pattern commonly met with in all large Chinese cities, but larger than is usual; it has now very much the same appearance that it must have worn in the days of Chinese ownership. So much is this the case, that the remark of a competent critic, Mr. Medhurst, regarding Chinese yamens, that "as a rule they do not bear looking into, and are generally maintained in a wretched condition of unrepair," may be applied to the structures now English property. The English yamen is a walled enclosure, or "compound," with a huge gate-

GARDEN OF ENGLISH YAMEN, CANTON.

way at the entrance, and a series of rambling buildings, after the fashion of such Chinese structures. The avenue has a few fine old trees overhanging it, and there is also a raised terrace paved with flags, ornamented by a solid carved stone balustrade. On the site of this terrace there formerly stood a hospital, which was destroyed by fire at the time of our occupation of the city.

DEER PARK AT BACK OF ENGLISH YAMEN.

A pleasant feature of this quaint and interesting old place is the deer park at the back, where some dozen deer gambol about and find easy ambush in the thickly wooded grounds, and the many visitors to the hospitable yamen find great pleasure in seeing them fed. A little plot of ground, lying close to the terrace and under the shade of the old trees, must here be noticed.

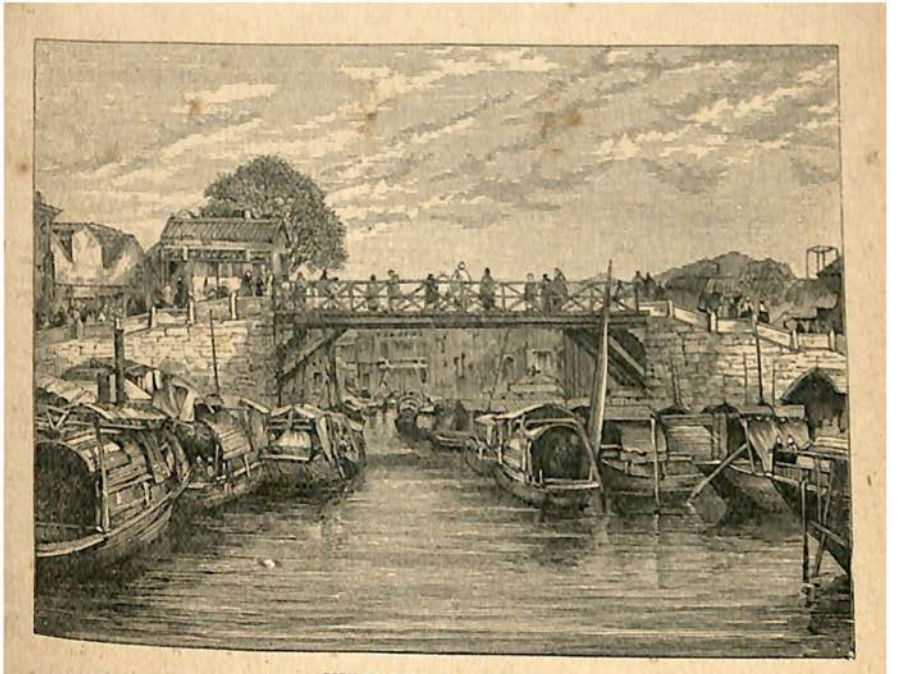
It is the place of interment of seven cats, which were old favourites of a former Consul, the late Sir Brooke Robertson, who for many years resided here, and was greatly reverenced by the Chinese. This little cemetery is carefully kept to this day.

The next few days were spent in visiting some sixty of the passenger boats which ply on the river, and in discussing, *ad nauseam*, the price and conditions of the journey. These ho-taus (lit. "River Ferries") as the class of boat employed for long distances is named, look like little floating houses, and have not the appearance of being swift. They do not belie their looks in this respect. A description of the one we travelled in is given later on.

At length, after an incredible amount of haggling, a bargain was struck, thanks to the kind offices of Mr. Henry, of the American Mission, who most charitably assisted us in the negotiation. The captain of one of the best ho-taus on the river was willing to deliver us at Pe-sê, called Pak-shik by the Cantonese, the highest navigable point of the West River, for 100 taels, which is equal, roughly, to about 151 dollars. He engaged to deliver us there in forty days; and, in order to stimulate him to rapid travelling, a clause was added by which he was to be fined or, in local parlance, "cut" five dollars for every day in excess, while for each day less he was to receive the same sum more.

The approximate distance from Canton to Pak-shik by the maps is about 600 miles; we should not therefore be bewildered by the rapidity of our movements while

on the river. We were compelled to take a larger boat than we ourselves wished, as we intended executing a survey of the river, and therefore required room for the duties attendant on this work.



VIEW NEAR CANTON.

CHAPTER II.

Disappointments in Canton—Aid from Hong-kong—An interpreter at last—The Cordon Bleu—Preparations—Our servants—Mr. Hong-beng-kaw—Canton boatwomen—Chinese music.

I HAD been in hopes that Mr. Jordan, of the Consular Service, then stationed in Canton, would have been able to accompany us at least to Yünnan, but the exigencies of the service would not permit his being allowed leave. The disappointment was as great to him as it was to ourselves.

Foiled in this quarter, I fell by accident upon what luckily seemed to be another chance. I had made the acquaintance of a cadet of the Hong-kong Civil Service, who was residing in Canton for the purpose of studying Cantonese; and from what he said, I understood him to be willing and anxious to go with us, if the required permission could be procured. I immediately ran over to Hong-kong, and called upon Sir John Pope Hennessy, the Governor, who was, however, unable to accord Mr. Lockhart the necessary leave.

As no servants were procurable in Canton, I made search for them in Hong-kong. A gentleman was kind enough to assist me in the matter, and promised to send some one in a few days, but warned me that the matter was not an easy one to arrange.

In Hong-kong I found a Chinese gentleman, Mr. Hong-beng-kaw, who not only seemed to be suitable in every way, but was anxious to accompany us as interpreter; but as one was expected from Shanghai, and for other reasons as well, the matter was left in abeyance. A few days later a cook appeared, and astonished me not a little! I was busily engaged one afternoon at the Consulate, when one of the servants

OUR HEAD INTERPRETER.

came to inform me that a gentleman was waiting to see me in the verandah. On going out, I saw this gentleman, neatly got up in European costume, while his portmanteau—an elaborate affair—was being taken out of the sedan-chair in which he had just come from the steamer. He was infinitely better dressed than I was, and his portmanteau was an *article de luxe*, such as I have never had in my possession. This was the cook!

His name was Mr. George Porphyrus, a native of Corfu, could not speak one single word of Chinese (knowledge of the language being a *sine quâ non*, as I myself was ignorant of the tongue)—had never been on a land journey anywhere—wanted the wages of a Parisian *chef*—and altogether was as unlikely a man as one could have found for the capacity of cook on an exploring expedition. He had served in that capacity on board the "Iron Duke," and this was the only qualification he could adduce for the post, and one which I failed to recognise. I had, of course, to explain all this to him in a modified form, and to pay the expenses of his journey. Needless to say, I wrote to my friend in Hong-kong, beseeching him—as I was neither a sinologue nor a *nouveau riche*—not to send me any more cooks of this *calibre*.

The next few days were spent in making the innumerable preparations inseparable from an exploration, and in prosecuting inquiries regarding the possibility of getting a credit on Pe-sê, where our land journey was to commence. At length we were successful in securing the services of a cook and boy, neither of them trained servants, but what was of more importance for our purpose, handy and active men, who were willing, and seemed able, to undergo discomfort. We were compelled to pay them three times their usual wages and their full expenses back to Canton. It was a great relief to be able to secure them even on such terms. It is said that a Chinaman will go *anywhere* for money, but our experience of Cantonese does not seem to prove

BOATWOMAN AND CHILDREN.

(*To face p.* 13, Vol. I.)

this to be invariably the case. These were the only men we found willing to go, in over-populated Canton.

The interpreter had not arrived from Shanghai, nor had we had any news of him. We were getting anxious. The days went past. We had been close on a fortnight in Canton, and still no interpreter. It was impossible to wait longer, so I entered into negotiations with Mr. Hong-beng-kaw. In reply to my offer, he said he would be delighted to go, and expressed his readiness to start at a moment's notice! This promptitude charmed us, being in striking contrast to our recent experiences. We thought ourselves fortunate in being able to secure the services of this gentleman, who spoke Mandarin fairly and knew English admirably. He had been educated in Scotland for six years, and promised to be a most pleasing and cultivated companion.

The number of boats in Canton is enormous. It is said that at one time there were 84,000 on the Government register. Possibly, however, a number of these may have been boats belonging to the surrounding districts, or old craft which had not been cut off the register. Many of them are managed entirely by women and children, the men of the family being on shore occupied otherwise. Still it is not uncommon to find a lady skipper and owner of the boat. In water-craft their skill is undeniable, and as far as tongue is concerned they have the better of the men. This boat-life is a peculiarity of China. Great numbers of people live entirely in boats, and seldom go on shore. The advantages are, that there is no ground-rent to pay, and

there is less danger from fire and thieves. Moreover, if the place does not suit, it is easy to move into a more congenial neighbourhood.

Eastern music has been irreverently designated as simple noise. It certainly is somewhat Wagnerian in this respect, and Europeans do not care to listen to a Chinese band any longer than they can help, even when it is modulated by coming over the water. Still there is a good deal of melody in the songs, and the female singers are occasionally really worth listening to, notwithstanding the high falsetto in which they always perform. Any tenderness of the air is, however, lost by the musicians, whose characteristic is energy, particularly in the instruments of percussion.

GROUP OF CHINESE MUSICIANS.

(*To face p.* 14, Vol. I.)

CHAPTER III.

Canton—Wu-chau-fu, limits of former survey of river—Life in Canton—Kidnapping an Englishwoman—Means of concealment—Statue of Marco Polo—Hero-worship—No second interpreter—Mr. Hewlett to the rescue—Sign-manual—Our passports—Visiting cards—"A dragon-bearded worthy"—"Mr. Spearman."

WE saw little of the Canton sights, being busily engaged; but I had the inestimable advantage of living in the heart of the city and witnessing daily, on my way from and to the yamen, the street-life of Canton. The city has been so often described that I shall spare the reader in this respect, and commence the description of our journey on the day we embarked on our ho-tau, passing somewhat lightly over the portion of the river as far as Wu-chau-fu, as this part of the voyage has been several times performed.

From Wu-chau-fu, our exploration work proper commenced—the river having been neither described nor surveyed beyond that place. *En passant*, Canton may be recommended strongly to the traveller as the most characteristic of the Chinese cities. It is in Canton that the national life shows itself most markedly. The foreigners are relegated to a small island above the native city, where the settlement, called Sha-min (lit. "Sandy Tract"), is situated. The city itself shows few signs of Western influence, except in some curiosity

shops. The streets of Canton, busy, and teeming with life, present a scene of animation and variety not to be matched elsewhere, and the life offers an opportunity, not only for amusement, but for a study of Chinese character.

To show how *native* a city it is, and how little is really known by foreigners of what goes on within the city walls, I give the following circumstance, narrated to me by one on whose statement entire reliance can be placed.

A short time ago information reached a foreign resident, through the medium of some native messenger, that a white woman, said to be an Australian, was living hidden away in the city, to which place she had been transported several years before. She had been brought up the river in a covered boat, and moved from thence in a closed sedan chair, muffled up, and had been carried *somewhere*. She had all these years been living in complete ignorance of the fact that any foreigners or English-speaking people were near her. This may seem astounding at first sight; but any one who has wandered through Canton, will have less difficulty in understanding it. Concealed in some by-street, she had been living, not even "*purda nishin*,"—as the natives of India term the close concealment of women—but hidden by a more effectual means, namely, in the seclusion afforded by the huge size of the city and the ignorance of the mass of the people regarding foreigners.

The reputed statue of Marco Polo in the "Temple of the 500 Genii" is one of the sights, and would prove

the esteem in which Ser Marco was held, if one could believe the figure to be his. Traditions of his great wisdom, when he held office for three years in Chehkiang, as well as his general reputation as a learned man, are extant among the literati of Canton, we were told. Few worthier men could have been chosen for hero-worship than the old Venetian; though I fear that this form of worship has not been followed by the Chinese in this case.

Mr. Hong-beng-kaw's acquaintance with Cantonese being slight, and as it was imperative that on the Canton river we should have a man who could carry on communication with the people in their own dialect, we took every measure possible to secure the services of such a man. None was to be had, however, and although advice had been received from Shanghai that an advance had been made to the interpreter there, and that he was about to start, no one appeared. Cantonese being spoken the whole way up the river, both in the Kwang-tung and Kwang-si provinces, it was impossible to start without such a man. We gave up all hope of seeing the Shanghai interpreter, and were in despair, when Mr. Hewlett, to our great relief, came to our rescue and proved himself "the friend in need." At considerable inconvenience to himself, he gave leave to one of the Consulate subordinates—who spoke Cantonese and English—to accompany us all the way to Yünnan, and, if absolutely necessary, right through to Burmah. With his assistance up the river, we should have every chance of gettting over the portion of the journey through

Kwang-si,—which was reported to be dangerous, in consequence of the ill-will of the people and of the river banditti—and should be able to make a fair start on our land journey from Pe-sê.

In making a start we considered ourselves to be most fortunate. Mr. Hong-beng-kaw was a gentleman of culture, who had studied and travelled in Europe, was well read in European literature, and, possessing a wide acquaintance with Chinese classics and history, was deeply interested in his own people. He was not only all this—a rare collection of qualities to be found in any Chinaman at the present day; but had the still more valuable quality—without which all these other attainments would have lost largely in value—of apparently feeling a true interest in the work on which we were engaged. In our local interpreter we found a valuable man, for he possessed—though not literate—not only an intimate acquaintance with his own people and their spoken dialect, and a fair knowledge of English—but also the knowledge of Mandarin as well. He was also well acquainted with the ways of the officials and the etiquette of the yamens, qualities which were likely to prove of great assistance to us, should occasion arise for holding communication with the mandarins *en route* while on the river.

Our agreements with the boatman and our cook and boy were all drawn up in the Consulate. They were most imposing-looking documents, and signed *lo-wen*—that is, with the impress of the finger, which is done by dipping the finger in ink and stamping it on the paper,

leaving an impression of the grain of the digit. Forgery of such a signature is claimed to be impossible. It is said to be used for deeds of importance, such as divorce; but, I suspect, mainly by people who are illiterate. In case of divorce it is employed, probably, because the women cannot write. This sign-manual has a solemnity of its own.

The carefulness of the Chinese servants was exhibited in the demand for a deposit of pay, to be left in Canton, and an advance of two-thirds of the boat-hire, which was paid on the recommendation of Mr. Jordan. Our passports, covering all the six southern provinces which we might, by any possible compulsory change of route, have to enter, were now safely in our keeping.

We had received our Chinese cards—a most important article of travel in China—for calling on officials. In these cards our patronymics were changed; my friend, "bearded like the pard," or as the Chinese say, "a dragon-bearded worthy," developed into Mr. Sucking Baby, while I—less hirsute and less bellicose in appearance—became Mr. Spearman. These cards are quite unlike the European paste-board, being printed in black on vermilion-red slips of paper of varying sizes —according to the position of the owner—ours being, with becoming modesty, seven inches long by three inches broad. For official work, they are sometimes folded four, six, or eight times. For mourning, the paper is white, and the name in blue.

CHAPTER IV.

Packages—Money for the journey—No letter of credit—Hampered with money—River piracy—Gunboats—Foreigners all wealthy—Babies as a defence—Chinese dress, a necessity—Old barbarian devil—Curiosity of Chinese crowds—Our Chinese outfit.

WE had now undergone the tedious, but necessary process of packing our stores, medicines and instruments, in cases enclosing a ten days' supply, and not

METHOD OF CARRYING A JAR OF SPIRITS.

weighing more than 60 lbs. each. Two such packages make one mule load, and one can be carried by a coolie or porter: 100 Chinese lbs., equal to about 120 lbs.

English, was the mule-load, as far as we could learn. The most diligent inquiry, however, gave us little information regarding the customs of porterage and other matters in South Yünnan.

Unfortunately, no Roman Catholic missionary, at that time in Canton, had been to Yünnan, although missions are established there. If we had difficulty in gaining information regarding loads, we had still more regarding the money to be taken for use *en route*. The most conflicting advice was given. At last we made up our minds, after sifting the evidence in regard to this question, to take Mexican dollars, new and chopped, for use on the river, and to use *sycee* silver (stamped) for the Yünnan land journey.

Numerous attempts were made to secure a credit on Pe-sê—a point regarding which we were assured, on arrival in Canton, there would be no difficulty—and after much trouble, an English merchant, who was kind enough to interest himself in the matter, induced his Comprador, or Chinese banker, to arrange the matter. Everything was supposed to be settled, and I was to receive the letter of credit the day before that which had been fixed for our leaving.

The negotiation, however, broke down, on account of its being near the Chinese new year, and the consequent frequent failures, so the Comprador said: and we were compelled, sorely against our will, to take a considerable sum of money—the smallest amount absolutely necessary—with us in sycee silver, cast in ingots weighing ten taels, or thirteen ounces each.

This we had been especially anxious to avoid, as the West river above Wu-chau, where it runs through Kwang-si, has an evil reputation, and is said to suffer from organized piracy, or rather river robbery, notwithstanding all the efforts of the mandarins to put it down, and the *cordon* of gunboats and police patrol established on that part of it.

Previous experience and common-sense taught one, that gentlemen of the banditti stamp in other parts of the world, and presumably not less so in China, are nearly always well-informed regarding travellers. Whether they are *en rapport* with the boatmen, servants, or others, it is impossible to say; but the fact remains that they are accurately informed regarding everything which is taken with you, and consequently seldom attack a boat unless there is something in it worth looting; on the sensible principle, I suppose, of not wasting powder in shooting crows! We were compelled to take the silver, whether it was to our liking or not, and had to seek consolation in the comforting remark of a Chinese gentleman who told us "it does not matter, for they always think foreigners have great riches with them. They see your *hongs*, and the lavish manner of living of your merchants. In the eyes of the people, every foreigner must be wealthy!" It was useless to protest that we were very far from being men of wealth. "That," he said, "I may believe, but you must not expect the common people to think so!"

As we could not avoid carrying the money, no secret was made of the amount, and it was kept under

my bed in an old tin office, or despatch, box. Having the cash with us we were compelled to place our revolvers *en évidence*, a point which I had been very anxious to avoid, for I am no believer in fire-arms for travel in a strange land. For choice, I should infinitely prefer an umbrella, or, better still in China, *a baby*.

CHINESE CHILDREN.

Chinese are so fond of children, that such an appendage would be the safest means of defence and of ingratiating oneself with the natives that one could have. However, unluckily we could not satisfy their weakness in this respect.

After careful consideration,—acting on the advice of Mr. McCarthy, of the China Inland Mission, whom I

had met in London; and of Bishop Foucard, in Canton, —we decided to take full Chinese costume with us, with the view of wearing it throughout the China portion of our journey, after we had left the Kwang-tung province.

For some little distance out of Canton, the inhabitants have been in the habit of seeing the *Fan-qui-lo*, or "old barbarian devil," as we have the honour of being called, and there would be no necessity for changing our dress. In Kwang-si and South Yünnan, where,—excepting the French expeditions of Doudart de Lagrée and Dupuis, in their routes from South to North Yünnan,—no lay traveller had, as yet, set foot, it seemed to us wise to adopt Chinese costumes, in order to avoid attracting attention,—except on the occasion of our visits to officials, whom we hoped to trouble as little as possible.

The curiosity of Chinese crowds, so inevitable near all cities and towns, would be much less likely to be evoked by what they might discover—on close inspection—to be but very sorry specimens of their own race, than if we were to walk across country in the strange, and, to them, ridiculous costume of the West.

We never fancied that we should pass for Chinamen on close examination; a certain prominence of nose, and roundness of eye, would prevent that, as well as the awkwardness of our manner. Thus dressed, however, we firmly believed that, when seated on the roof of our boat or reclining in a sedan-chair, mounted on a pony or while on foot, we should escape, to a great extent, that dangerous element in Chinese travel,—curiosity.

This conclusion we came to, notwithstanding the adverse opinion expressed in Canton, by many old residents. In official calls,—when these should prove necessary,—we should, of course, "assert ourselves," as it would not be right that there should be any question of our nationality, and with the mandarins Chinese costume would probably assume the aspect of masquerade. Not only costume, but bedding, cooking utensils, travelling kit, in fact practically *everything* we took with us was Chinese.

The Monseigneur and Bishop Foucard—who have a wide and long experience of *inland* China — quite approved of our decision, and gravely warned us of the dangers of the river. Indeed, dangerous as the hostility of the people in cities and towns would prove, they told us that the banditti on the river were more to be feared, and that careful and constant watch was needful.

CHAPTER V.

On board at last—Good-bye—Kindness experienced—Jack—A letter of introduction—Our start—Junction of the West and North River—The Sheffield of Southern China—Flower-boats—Fatal beauties—No learned lumber in their heads—"Women and wine, mirth and laughter"—Insipidity of Chinese home life—The T'Ang-Ming Hwang—Pretty names—Persian water-wheels.

EVERYTHING was now ready. Our party, including Mr. Hong-beng-kaw, the Cantonese interpreter, coolie cook, and two boys (one being Mr. H. B. K.'s), numbering seven in all, were safely ensconced on our ho-tau, and the boatmen were all on board. At last, after fifteen days in Canton, on the evening of the 4th of February we embarked, and bade good-bye to a large party of friends, including Mr. Hewlett, Captain Day, of H.M.S. "Wyvern," Mr. Jordan, the Rev. Mr. Henry, Mr. Lockhart and others. Miss Henry, a young American lady of seven years of age, from whom the unhealthy, Cantonese climate has failed to steal any of the vivacity which is the prerogative of her countrywomen in their own land, waved us a last adieu.

Although relieved, and glad to feel that at length we were fairly started upon our venture into unknown lands —one of the most delicious sensations of which roving man is capable—it was with feelings of no little regret that we parted from these friends, who had not only

A CHINESE ARTIST.

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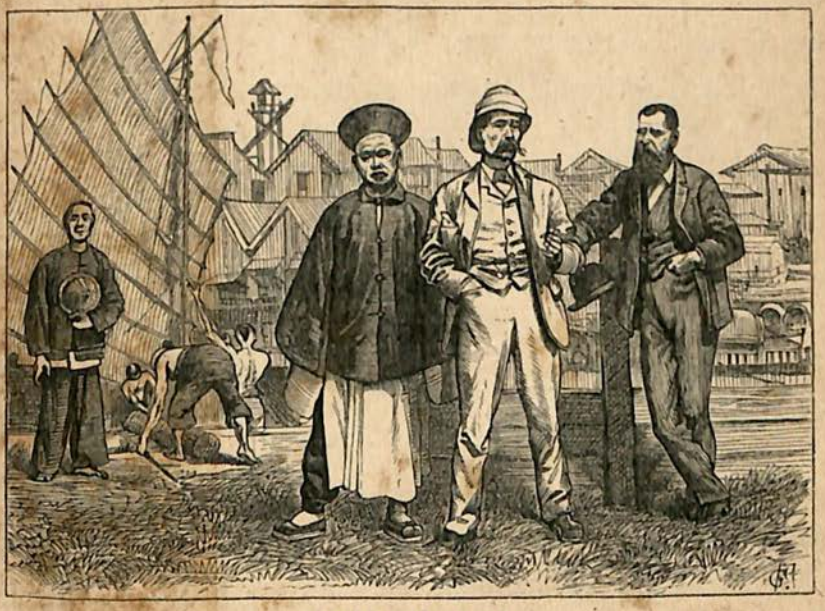
done so much to make our stay pleasant, but had, in various ways, given us acceptable assistance. We could hardly realise that we had been strangers to them only a fortnight before.

Amongst the many who assisted us, honourable mention must be given to Jack, who has been the head boatman at the Consulate for many years, and whose



BEFORE THE START.

1. Jack. 2. The Tin-chai. 3. Mr. Colquhoun. 4. Mr. Wahab.

invariable good nature, and readiness to aid us in our packing operations, won our hearts, as his pleasant, honest face and gentle manner invariably do those of all visitors to the Consulate. The drawing of the group before our start was prepared from three photographs. I wished often afterwards that we had, while in Canton, had our likenesses executed by one of the local artists.

Mr. Hewlett crowned his numerous acts of kindness by procuring for us from the Tsung-tu, the Viceroy or Governor-General of "the Two Kwangs" (namely, Kwang-tung and Kwang-si), a letter of introduction to the Sub-Prefect at Pe-sê, inviting him to give us all the assistance in his power, in procuring transport and supplies for the overland journey. This letter, it is needless to say, we found of the greatest value.

Before daybreak, on the morning of February 5th, by the light of a beautiful moon, we left Canton and made our way slowly, by the Fati Creek to the junction of the Hsi-ho, or West River with the North River, at San-shui-yuen (San-shui-hsien),* whence it makes its way southward, through a network of islands in its estuary, to the sea; the principal stream finding its exit above Macao.

On the way we passed Fut-shan (Fu-shan), a place well known, which has been fairly described as the Sheffield of Southern China. The earthenware which is produced here is excellent, very low in price, and commands an enormous sale. We were informed that the pipes for the new waterworks at Hong-kong were to be supplied from this place;—as, however, these waterworks are still *in nubibus*, too much stress must not be laid on this magnificent prospective order for the local market.

* Names are given first in Cantonese dialect, and in parenthesis in Mandarin. The Cantonese is the one in general use, on the river.

CHINESE MODES OF DRESSING HAIR.

(*To face p.* 29, Vol. I.)

Fut-shan is mainly noticeable for the somewhat picturesque, but eminently dirty appearance, of the decayed-looking wooden structures lining the banks. Numbers of *hwa-tings*, or "flower-boats," are to be seen, but as the fair occupants are never made up till the evening, —when their day commences,—we only saw them *en déshabille*, lolling in the doorways and lounging about, undecked with their paint and toggery. The amount of

BOATS AT FUT-SHAN.

these adornments they carry when in evening dress is incredible. Seen by us, in the cruel daylight, they looked anything but the "fatal beauties" which, in Chinese poetry, they have the reputation of being.

These Cantonese boats, similar in structure to our ho-tau are beautifully and richly decorated. The artistes

—the young ladies afore-mentioned—though some of them were not wanting in good looks, and a gracious manner of their own, are very illiterate, and incapable of reading and writing—far more of improvising poetry—as they are said to have done, in the good old times. A few who can do so may still be found in the north, to this day, I am told. Dinners, with music afterwards, are in favour: and songs, to the accompaniment of the guitar and two-stringed fiddle, are favourite amusements with not only the *jeunesse dorée*, but men of altogether a superior stamp.

Only the utter insipidity of Chinese home-life could drive any one, with any mind, to seek the society of the ladies in these flower-boats, where the only variation from the round of songs and childish badinage is a turn at that most imbecile of games, *morra*, so common in Italy, the *micare digitis* of the Romans. The whole is now but a sorry survival of the institution as it existed during the palmy days of the dynasty which may be called the Elizabethan age of Chinese history, namely, the T'ang-ming Hwang. All the intellect and spirit of the former institution has gone, and there remains only a debauchery of music, allied to the *abandon* of manner prevalent in these floating palaces laden with flowers. Some of these have pretty names; for instance—"Snow-flower," and four linked together, "Four Walls of Flowers."

Persian water-wheels were to be seen at work on the bank, close above the town, and we observed them put to a use which I had never before noticed, namely, the

baling out of boats. Two men were thus at work, throwing out a stream of water, and chain pumps were in use for irrigation purposes.

A CHAIN-PUMP.

CHAPTER VI.

View near Hsi-nam—Custom-house at Sam-shui—The Shau-hing-hap—Beauty of scenery—Contracted gorge—The pass of the Dragon's Mouth—Legend of the Expectant Wife and the Detained Husband—Floating hay-stacks—Boat villages—Shau-hing-fu an important city—River-embankment—Floods—Wooden houses—The Seven Stars.

AT Sai-nam (Hsi-nam), which lies about two miles below Sam-shui-yuen, there is a fine view of the river, in the direction of that town, whose pagoda stands out a central figure in the picture, the horizon being bounded by a low range of hills. A large fleet of the many various craft, in which this river abounds, was sweeping down its waters as we stood on a small bluff over the stream and watched the scene. The ground on either side is fertile, and under the closest cultivation.

Sam-shui is admirably situated for the purpose of levying Customs and Lekim duties, and consequently at this point goods are first taxed on their way from Canton. The place itself, a walled town of no importance, lies partly in ruins, half a mile distant from the river.

On the 7th of February we passed the Shau-hing-hap, or Shau-hing Gorge, one of wonderful grandeur, something like those seen on some of the Highland Lochs, or the upper parts of the Salween. The wild beauty of the gorge merits the great reputation which it has among the Chinese, and would make it a show place in Europe.

The entrance from the Canton side presents a striking picture. A wall of nearly perpendicular rock rises almost sheer from the water-edge on the north side,

THE SHAU-HING GORGE.

while the hills appear piled together in prodigal profusion. Through the deep channel contracted to some eight hundred feet—or a sixth of its usual width—the placid waters run swiftly, and with great force. The

depth is said to be from sixty to eighty feet; but, from the formation of the hills, it is probably greatly in excess of that figure. The gorge is four miles in length, formed by the heaping together, close to the river, of lofty mountains which, by some freak of nature, seem to have been wantonly scattered about. The eye searches in vain for traces of timber on the hill sides. It is said to be, and may well be, the most beautiful gorge on the river. On the farther side the mountains, still in confused masses, recede rapidly, and the country regains an open character.

A curious legend was told us regarding a solitary, weird figure, which stands out, rudely weather-worn and abruptly, from a hill-top in the pass, making it a remarkable object. This point of the pass is called Lung-mun, or "Dragon's Mouth," and the hill "The Husband-expecting Hill." The figure itself, which is called "The Expectant Wife," resembles that of a woman, whose bent head and figure down to the waist are clearly depicted.

THE EXPECTANT WIFE.

The story, widely known in this and the neighbouring province, runs as follows. Centuries ago, a certain poor woman was left by her husband, who went on a journey into Kwang-si, close by, but in those days considered a

wild and distant region, full of dangers. He promised to return in three years. The time went slowly and sadly past, for she dearly loved her lord, but no husband appeared. He, ungrateful and unfaithful spouse, had fallen in love with a fair face in Kwang-si, who turned out to be a sorceress or witch and—throwing a spell over him, like the Lorelei—charmed him to his destruction, and turned him into stone. To this day may be seen his figure, standing near a cave close by the river, which is known by the name of "The Detained Man Cave."

The wife, on his failing to return, broken by grief, was likewise turned into a stone, and the belief is that a supernatural power will one day bring the couple to life again and reward the ever-faithful wife. The legend receives entire credence from the simple and credulous boatmen and country-people.

A well-made footpath skirts the foot of the gorge, the hill torrents being spanned by stone culverts and bridges of solid construction. A number of scows, heavily laden with enormous loads of dried grass, and others with huge burdens of firewood, staggered along so heavily laden that the boats could hardly be seen. It seemed as if the burdens themselves were slowly drifting down the river. In some cases a number of these boats are lashed together, forming a huge floating village, with nearly all the accessories of a Chinese hamlet; the wives and children, the poultry-yards, even the pigs are sometimes there. Only the joss-house and the ancestral hall are wanting to make the picture complete.

The city of Shau-hing-fu (Chao-ch'ing-fu) lies on the north bank of the river, close to the gorge, and is remarkable for its far-stretching suburbs and nine-storied pagoda, built after the pattern common in the south of China. This city was the provincial capital when the Portuguese first anchored off the coast, and as the seat of the local government was a place of note. At the present day, it is a town of some commercial importance. Traces of its former grandeur are to be seen in its streets, paved with huge stone slabs, the busy shops and hongs, and the solid stone protective wall, which guards this city from the force and violence of the river floods. These floods are sudden and dangerous, and their cause is to be found in the mountainous country through which this stream runs, and which reaches close up to Shau-hing on the west. From the river it has the appearance of some of the towns on the Italian lakes.

On our stroll through the town, accompanied, of course, by the usual crowd of curious idlers—principally boys—we noticed that many of the houses were solidly built of brick, and well finished. Yamens and other public buildings of former times were frequent. At either end of the city, the houses are perched upon piles, with stonework bases, the woodwork forming a picturesque frame, but one that does not bear close inspection—the habitations being used jointly by the people and the pigs, serving as admirable shelter for both.

The appearance of the better class of buildings,—here, as in Fut-shan, and no doubt other towns,—is marred by

the indifference which the Chinese exhibit to artistic appearance, or indeed to the ordinary fitness of things. Facing the handsome piece of carving, or elaborate stucco-work, is inevitably a string of pork sausages, or a row of dried ducks, and such terrible-looking things they are—strange contrast!

Close at the back of Shau-hing lie seven isolated limestone peaks, which we saw from the back of the town, rising abruptly out of the low, green plain. These are called the "Seven Stars," and were once a favourite resort for pious people who went to worship at the temples and caves. They are not much visited now. In one of the larger temples there are, I was told, several images of bronze, seven feet in height. I regret that we were unable to inspect the caves.

CHAPTER VII.

The "Great Cold"—"The beginning of Spring"—Warm clothing—Proclamation for our heads—Outrage at Nan-ning — Enmity to foreigners—Superstition of lower classes—Keep to our boats—Adopt Chinese dress—Official visits—Our skipper—Bearded—No surrender —Only one wife—"The ever-prosperous"—Comfortable travelling.

FOR some days, after passing through the gorge, the serrated range of hills retires from the river some little distance, and begins to be somewhat wooded, and patches of cultivation are noticeable wherever the ground can be tilled.

Although the "Great Cold" which, according to the Chinese term, should last from the 22nd of January to the 6th of February, is supposed to be over—it was now the 8th of February—the weather, at night especially, was still bitterly cold. The thermometer had read 39°, but that is no index to the intensity of the cold, which no doubt was owing to the sharp blasts of wind which, entering our draughty ho-tau, pierced us through like a knife. We were compelled to avail ourselves of everything in the shape of warm clothing to heap on our beds; indeed I have slept several nights in an ulster and a woollen "tam-o-shanter" which, amongst many other gifts of value, I owed to the kind forethought of Mr. Hewlett.

The "Beginning of Spring," which is supposed to be

on the 6th of February by Chinese reckoning, had not yet shown itself. We had even worn a Chinese mediæval-looking head-gear which is wadded, buttons under the chin, and has flaps at the side. These are made of cardboard and lined with fur in the north, where they are commonly worn.

One morning, while we were quietly enjoying our smoke after dinner, the Tin-chai or messenger, our Cantonese interpreter, rushed in with a face on which perturbation was clearly marked, to tell us that we must not proceed. The captain had heard from some friend, then on his way down the river, that we had better not venture beyond Wu-chau-fu, which lies three days' journey beyond this, at the junction of the Fu-ho and Hsi-ho.

His story was that in Wu-chau he had heard that the news of two foreigners coming up the river had reached, —with that wonderful rapidity with which news travels in these countries which know not the daily paper—that portion of Kwang-si lying between Wu-chau and Nan-ning on our route; and that the feelings of the people had been aroused against us. According to him, a proclamation or placard had been issued, by whom he could not say, offering 200 taels, or, roughly speaking, £50, for each of our heads, to any one patriotic enough to do the deed.

This was pleasant intelligence. If we could have laid the flattering unction to our souls that the report was merely some piece of exaggerated gossip, in which the Chinese are largely accustomed to deal, the affair might

have taken a laughable turn. Unfortunately, however, the very serious manner of the Tin-chai and the head boatman, and the assurance that their informant, a man who was inclined to be friendly to foreigners, believed implicitly in his narration, coupled with the fact that Kwang-si had not long ago been the scene of a serious outrage on the Roman Catholic missionaries there, made it impossible for us to treat the matter lightly. Moreover, the river between Wu-chau and Nan-ning, was known to be a neighbourhood peculiarly inimical to foreigners, for it was in this very district that in 1870 a similar proclamation was issued, and Mr. Moss, a delegate of the Hong-kong Chamber of Commerce, who tried to make his way up the river, had to turn back.

Any one knowing the grossly superstitious character of the lower classes in China, can well imagine how easily agitators, generally of the literati class, can influence the native mind. A Chinese crowd once excited is without doubt to be feared more than other crowds. Unluckily, our instruments and photographic apparatus, which we had been known to bring and even seen to use lower down the river, where the people seemed quite friendly, would lend an admirable pretext for the agitators to use against the coming of the already by no means popular Fan-qui-lo.

At Wu-chau we hoped to hear reliable news; meanwhile we proposed, by keeping to our boat as much as possible, and dressing in Chinese costume, to avoid attracting attention altogether *en route;* we likewise

resolved not to land at any large town, and, unless absolutely necessary, to avoid landing altogether.

Next morning we adopted Chinese dress and, failing

IN CHINESE DISGUISE.

a close inspection, flattered ourselves that when seated in our boat we would not be recognisable by those in passing craft, or by people on the shore. The

messenger, head-boatman and servants all showed, if they did not openly express it by word, their great satisfaction at our not appearing in European costume. At the same time, should a visit to an official be necessary, we determined to wear our national dress. In such a case, no good end would have been served by using the Chinese costume, and we should doubtless have looked ridiculous in the eyes of the mandarin whom we might be visiting.

The captain of our ho-tau—a good little fellow, with a comical, weather-beaten, wizened face and shrinking manner—was delighted to see us when we went in the morning on deck, which is the roof of our boat. He said, "That is right," and his face beamed when he saw the "dragon-bearded worthy," namely my friend C. W. minus his beard; he wanted us to shave our moustaches, a point which we could not concede, however, as being necessary. In this one respect we were determined to make a stand.

The captain was a bit of a wag; indeed his wizened face spoke with humour, and we often indulged in some innocent badinage with him. He told us one day part of his history; how he had worked his way up to the ownership of our ho-tau after many years of toilsome labour, and also of his wife and two little children at home. When one of us jokingly asked him,—"What! only one wife?" his answer, given with a very comical little shake of the head, savoured of Scottish canniness, —"A poor man cannot keep wives like chickens." Evidently, in his opinion, polygamy is a luxury reserved for the mandarin or wealthy trader!

The name of our boat was "The Chow-hing"—"The Ever-prosperous," derived, by a happy conceit, from the captain's name, which was Chow (meaning ever) and Hing (prosperity). There is a subtle ingenuity in thus including in the name of our craft his own patronymic in so telling a manner. The captain's face did not belie his mother-wit. It is not to be imagined that we led a life of discomfort and general "pigging it" in our ho-tau. By no means—our boat was very comfortable; it would have been perfection for river travel, in the hot weather; we had everything that we could want in the way of Chinese chairs and beds, and, what is of more consequence in boat travelling, plenty of elbow-room.

CHAPTER VIII.

Pleasure parties—Elbow-room—Classic quotations—Rivers inhabited by dragons—Hint to travellers—Our Ho-tau—Cold draughts—Excusable cries—Emulation—Close as herrings—Termagants.

THE name of ho-tau is given, as I have said before, to a class of travelling boats for long distances. They are found in abundance on the Canton river, and generally used by mandarins and well-to-do traders. Sometimes they are used, close by Canton, for pleasure parties to Fut-shan and other places, when some musical artistes from one of the many flower-boats are taken to while away the hours pleasantly.

One of these excursions by water might form a fitting subject for Dante Rosetti, or Burne-Jones! The poorer class of Chinaman—poor fellow!—is a hardy, tough creature, knowing few comforts all his life; but the rich, both traders and mandarins, are effeminate in their ways, and always travel *en grand tenue.*

My experience of boat travel in India, Burmah and Siam had prepared me for a much rougher method; I was astonished at the liberal and, to our ideas, extravagant allowance of space, and the well-ordered arrangements of the rooms. The Chinese not only pay great attention to the nomenclature of their vessels, but each has a number of tablets or panels, with quotations from

favourite authors written out, and let into the back partition of the main cabin. In our case we had six enclosed in frames of rich gilding, with the usual pre-Raphaelite-looking flower decoration above and below. A translation of one runs thus :—

INTERIOR OF OUR BOAT.

"Mountains are not alone famous for their height, but as the abodes of immortals.

"Rivers are not renowned merely on account of their depth but when inhabited by dragons.

"This my narrow craft (boat) where I live virtuously (with virtue and contentment) is more secure than the imperial throne."

The last lines, an ingenious adaptation of the Chinese classics by our captain, I believe, we took to be a polite,

and by no means uningenious, hint to the traveller not to grumble! The hint was unnecessary in our case, as we both considered, as all travellers should be able to—

"That man, I trow, is doubly curst,
Who of the best can make the worst;
And he, I'm sure, is doubly blest,
Who of the worst can make the best."

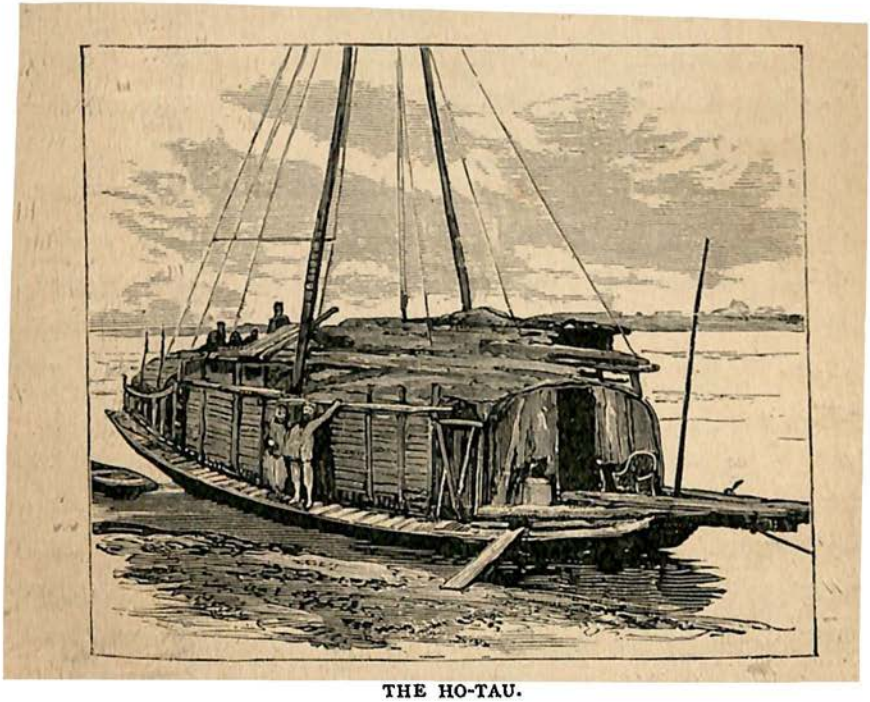
If the ho-tau has all these advantages—and on a journey of forty days space is invaluable—it has the bad point of being slow, difficult of defence—a material point on a river whose upper waters are infested with robbers—and I doubt much whether it is of the best construction for the river.

For defence against pirates, we carried a regular armory. First there were two cannon of about one-and-a-half inch bore, stationed most imposingly on either side of the upper roof-deck, so as to place them well *en évidence* to all evil-doers.

Inside we had twelve old-fashioned weapons resembling blunderbusses, except that the nozzle was not widened; six straight pikes; three 3-pronged pikes; three halberts; half-a-dozen ancient horse-pistols and one revolver! The halbert and spear are the two famous weapons of Chinese chivalrous romance, but I fear they would prove of but poor efficiency in these days of revolving firearms. Chinese poetry is full of the doughty deeds performed by these simple weapons in the olden days.

Our ho-tau was a flat-bottomed hulk, drawing about twenty inches (18 to 24 being the usual limit), on which

was placed a superstructure forming a deck-house about eight feet high and ten feet wide, running nearly the whole length of the hull, a small space being left as a flush bow for working the long and heavy oar-helm in front. The deck-house was divided into three separate cabins by movable partitions or bulkheads, the centre



THE HO-TAU.

one being the largest and most comfortable, and the one which we used, as bed and sitting-room. The fore cabin was used by the servants and, in our case, for cooking; but usually the cooking is done behind.

The small back cabin served as bed-room for Mr. Hong-beng-kaw. On either side there was a variety of doors and small glass windows, which were very con-

venient. These latter were entirely hidden at night by sliding wooden shutters, and could be swung open during the day if necessary. The arrangement is admirable as regards comfort in hot or even cool weather, but on cold windy days it is terrible. Sitting in the draught I could write feelingly, and might have compiled a dissertation thereon. The wooden framing, wretchedly pieced together, seemed, with a horrible ingenuity, to be purposely made to create draughts, and was certainly a success,—if that was the intention.

On each side of the boat, about a foot above water, there was a foot-board about eighteen inches broad, along which the crew ran or walked when poling. When at this work, they uttered the most execrable cries. They pierced my ears as I wrote: I hoped, but unavailingly, to get accustomed to the unearthly din. At first we not unseldom mistook this cry, when resumed after a lull, for that of a man in terrible pain. We more than once stopped writing and rushed out, only to find that it was the men poling! The cry is accompanied by a stampede of feet, the boatmen vying with one another to give the heaviest, noisiest tread.

The deck, or roof, is formed by planking which is waterproof, over which was littered all sorts of odds and ends. The crew were crowded into the smallest space imaginable abaft the deck, where they were packed as close as herrings. Over their berth, above the rising stern, is the captain's private tiny cabin. The captain usually takes his wife along with him, but, luckily for us,

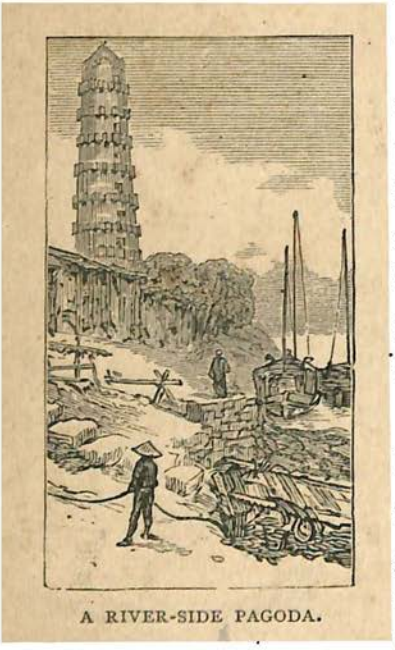
WOMEN OF SOUTHERN CHINA. (*To face p.* 49, Vol. I.)

ours did not do so. Luckily, I say,—for the captain is said, like other men of his profession, to be more manageable when the wife is not by; besides which, these women have the reputation of being terrible termagants, and use language which a polite pen refuses to record.

CHAPTER IX.

The "Cocks-comb Rock" — Joss-house — Voluntary subscriptions — Learned men from the West—Beautiful scenes—Sunset—Whistling for the wind — Ignorance — Superstition — Suspicion and dread of foreigners—Rain—Wa-piu-seh—Pirate chief—Magic slippers and sword—The pedometer—"Where is my buffalo?"

ON the morning of February 9th we passed the "Cocks-comb Rock," on the left bank of the river, a jagged, black crystalline marble ridge of rock, standing abruptly out of the water, with white boulders tumbled out carelessly at its foot. When first seen in the grey morning, it had the look of some ruined castle; but nearer inspection dispelled the illusion, and showed that the name given by the Chinese had reason in it.



A RIVER-SIDE PAGODA.

In the afternoon we passed a brand-new joss-house, with the usual fantastic stucco-work and gaudy colouring, perched on the top of a fine stone rubble retaining wall, in five tiers or steps built into the hill side. The north bank here is steep. Soon after, we passed a fine, nine-storied pagoda

of the pattern usual in China, a photograph of which we were enabled to take, from the boat.

A canoe came alongside during the day, to hand us a huge, well-thumbed volume, which turned out to be a voluntary subscription-book, for keeping the roads on the north side of the river in repair. The donations varied from ten cents (about fourpence-halfpenny) upwards, but there were few above thirty cents; and the collector was astonished when he at once received a dollar from us. The names of all donors, with amounts given, are entered. The future traveller will find ours written down as, "learned men from the West," in which *rôle* (may we be forgiven the deception!) we were figuring. It is imperative to adopt some profession which will be understood, as the Chinese are so inquisitive about one's calling, and you have to choose between official, missionary, trader, or—as we chose—the class of literati, "schoolmasters abroad."

Later on in the day the river got more and more beautiful, resembling—but for the clumps of bamboos and craft to be seen surrounding every village and hamlet,—many of the more lovely scenes on the shore of some Swiss lakes. The hills still continued in confused masses, close to the river. We never wearied of studying the constantly changing landscape, and the mornings and evenings presented scenes of wonderful loveliness.

Before sunset we watched one evening the sun throwing beams of gold, through the clouds, over the hill-tops across the water, and it was certainly a lovely

sight,—"Und die immer grünen Ufer glühen im Sonnen Abendschein." It was delicious to sit at the edge of our boat next the doorway, to watch the river and listen to the hum of voices reaching us over the water, from the village or hamlet close by.

Our boatmen, we noticed, whistled for the wind in the same fashion as our sailors do. I have noticed this often in Burmah, and fancy it is common to most countries. One day Hong-beng-kaw was talking to one of the boatmen, when we were becalmed, and asked, "Why do you not chin-chin your joss for wind?" His reply was an astonishing one;—"Oh, we have been chin-chinning all day"—and then, turning to one of his comrades—"The foreigners are right, after all; it *is* absurd to take a piece of wood, and kneel down before it with incense!" There was a daring of thought in this, but that he should give it expression, surprised us greatly.

We were anxious to land and examine, and take with us some geological specimens from the hill-sides on either side of the river, but feared to arouse the superstition of the people. These poor folk are left in the bonds of ignorance by the literati—for knowledge in the people would mean loss of prestige, power and, indeed, livelihood to themselves.

They have cunningly fostered the belief that foreigners come to their country to spy the nakedness of the land, and that, by chipping stones or taking an angle here or there, they steal away the *Po*, or "good fortune" from the place.

Thus, in the habits of foreigners who may possess slight scientific attainments, which they are anxious to increase, they see a reason for deadly animosity and dread. We become objects of suspicion, fear, and hate in the eyes of the ignorant, who are by no means so unkindly and sullen as they have been depicted; though it is a wonder that they are not so, considering the centuries of hard, cheerless toil they have undergone.

Regarding these people, it may be truly said, in the words of Goethe,—

"Warum treibt sich das Volk so und schreit? Es will sich ernähren,
Kinder zeugen und die nähren, so gut es vermag;
Merke dir, Reisender, dass, und thue zu Hause desgleichen!
Weiter bringt es kein Mensch, stell' er sich wie er auch will."

The following morning, for the first time, we had rain, and the sky was lowering and overcast. The crew were tracking high upon the bank, when the rain came down in torrents. In a few seconds they were all in the boat, clad in their so-yi (grass-coats) which serve as waterproofs, and their large bamboo hats, which answer for either sun or rain.

In the forenoon we passed Wa-piu-seh (Hua-piao-shih), a hill of wild and fantastic shape, rearing itself boldly behind a small ridge, close to the river. The foreground was well wooded, with cultivation in front. When we passed, the summit was clad in mist, slowly rolling off, and presented a beautiful picture.

This bend of the river in former days was the haunt of a famous river robber, who was the dread of the whole country side. In this land of legends, such a

place could not fail to have its history, and the story runs that, one night, a vision appeared to a man, and intimated to him that he might cross the river,—which is dangerously swift and full of eddies,—near the abode

A SO-YI, OR RAIN-COAT AND CAPE.

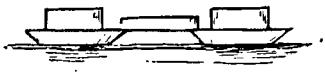
of the robber, with a pair of slippers and a sword which were given to him, and slay the enemy of the neighbourhood. This he did, and nothing remains of the pirate but the memory of him.

A trivial incident was the cause of calling forth a popular Chinese story. My companion C. W. had been examining a lot of barometers, aneroids, and other instruments, and could not find a pedometer, which he had a short time before laid on the bed in the cabin. Search was made, but to no purpose. The servants were called in, and hunted in all the unlikely places—as is the invariably provoking fashion of servants to do, all the world over—but in vain. The pedometer was gone. At dinner-time my friend put his hand into a pouch at his side and—pulled out the pedometer! On my joking him about this, Mr. Hong-beng-kaw told us that the Chinese have a story of a herd-boy, driving home a number of buffaloes, seated on one of them, and crying bitterly, "Where is my buffalo?"

CHAPTER X.

Customs barriers—Stifling trade—Rushing the stations—Smuggling salt—Photography dangerous—The priest's alarm—Curiosity of crowd—The spell—Hard-working boatmen—Effect of our agreement—"How far, Your Excellency?"—Fear of ridicule—Maps of the river—Survey Department required—Jesuit surveys.

EVERY day we passed one or two Lekim, or Customs stations; so that the cost of goods must rapidly increase with the distance they have to be carried. The fact is, trade is paralysed by these Customs "barriers." No trade could be created in the face of such difficulties. These stations generally consist of one large, flat-bottomed boat, on which is erected the T'ing, or office of the petty official in charge, and alongside is the cook-house, on another boat. They are both curious-looking establishments.



It was amusing to notice the faces of the boatmen when we came near one of these stations; their evident anxiety, their affected indifference, the eagerness with which they imparted the intelligence that they had English mandarins on board, and last, but not least, the look of relief when they were once well away. Why all this anxiety to "rush" these stations?—because, doubtless, they were smuggling salt!

On hearing down the river the rumour regarding the

placard issued about foreigners, we gave up temporarily the photography, which had been succeeding admirably. One day, at Shau-hing, the façade of a temple was being taken, and Hong-beng-kaw was in conversation with a priest, who was standing idly at the doorway, explaining our photography, when he suddenly stopped, and said in a startled voice, "Why, you will photograph *me!*" and ran away.

The photographic apparatus, of course, excited a large amount of attention everywhere, and the curiosity of the crowd was laughable, when it was not oppressive. A few seconds sufficed in each case to gather a crowd round one, pushing, stumbling and trying by every possible means to peer into the camera. The velvet cover, however, was what, more than anything else, put their inquisitiveness on tenter-hooks. It was the velvet cloth that, concealing as it did the camera, worked the spell.

Our boatmen were a wonderfully hard-working, patient and good-natured set of men. Before daybreak we could hear them setting to work, and their long day of labour was in full swing and continued, with two brief intervals for their frugal meal and sweet after-pipe, the whole day until sunset. Their meals, be it noted, seldom occupied more than ten to fifteen minutes' time; this included a smoke for each man, from a few pipes which they had in common. This constituted almost the only release, or rest, from the hard labour of the day.

The persistence with which they pushed on is no doubt to be accounted for by the fact that Captain Chow was under agreement to deliver us in Pe-sê, for a certain

sum, in thirty-five days; and for each day under that time, he was to receive five dollars; while each day longer meant the loss of the same sum to him. He therefore, with commendable Chinese thrift, did not desire to loiter by the way, or indulge in *dolce far niente*, each minute of which would have cost him solid cash; and doubtless he had made some similar contract with his men.

The boatmen are better clad, and better fed, on this river than we expected to find them; there is to be found none of that tattered, torn look in their costume which, from all accounts, is apparent in the dress of the same class, further north in China.

They are generally good-natured, though one or two show churlish ways, which, however, are not proof against a little badinage. One of the steersmen, who happened to be of such a disposition, was asked, "How far is it to Wu-chau?" Making due allowance for the fact that all seafaring men notoriously dislike to be asked the distance to any place, his reply and manner were far from courteous! On Mr. H. B. K. turning to him, with his suavest manner, and inquiring, with assumed deference, "May it please Your Excellency to tell us how far it is to Wu-chau?" he, evidently fearing the ridicule of his companions, changed his tone at once.

Up to Wu-chau we had a comparatively easy time, but thence onward we had to be up at daybreak, and to leave off only at sunset like our boatmen, for there we commenced our survey work. The only existing maps of this river, and indeed of South China—with

the exception of the portion between Canton and Wu-chau, which was surveyed in 1859 by Lieut. Bullock, R.N.—are the Chinese maps, the only at all reliable portions of which are from the Jesuit surveys.

It is strange that the Chinese, with all their shrewdness, should not recognise the value of accurate surveys, more especially of their rich river valleys. A department of survey might with advantage be created. Once commenced and consolidated into a working machine on the European, or rather Anglo-Indian pattern, and officered, at first, in the higher posts by Europeans, Chinese students might be schooled, and in time take over the whole duties of the department. The revenue would receive a considerable increase, should such a comprehensive survey be undertaken.

In geographical matters the Chinese are not so backward as is generally imagined in Europe, although it is true they have no scientific methods of mapping in use; and generally, topographical work is held in but poor esteem. There are doubtless statesmen in plenty, throughout China, who may recognise the utility of geographical knowledge, but as a matter of policy they seem to despise such matters.

Richthofen says truly that the Ta-ching-yi-t'ung-chih (Imperial Gazetteer) was an enormous work. It was commenced in 1862, and completed in 1869, the principal data being from the Jesuit maps presented to Emperor Kanghi in 1718. Richthofen notices that the Chinese officials *condescended* so far as to utilise the foreign maps in their hydrography.

CHAPTER XI.

Fong-chuen—Boundary of Kwang-tung—In Kwang-si—Arrival at Wu-chau-fu—Importance—Junction of the Fu-ho and West river—Politeness at Customs stations—Mr. Secretary—Our complaint to the Prefect—Agitator nobodies—Our gunboat—The captain "jumping like a sparrow"—Chinese politeness.

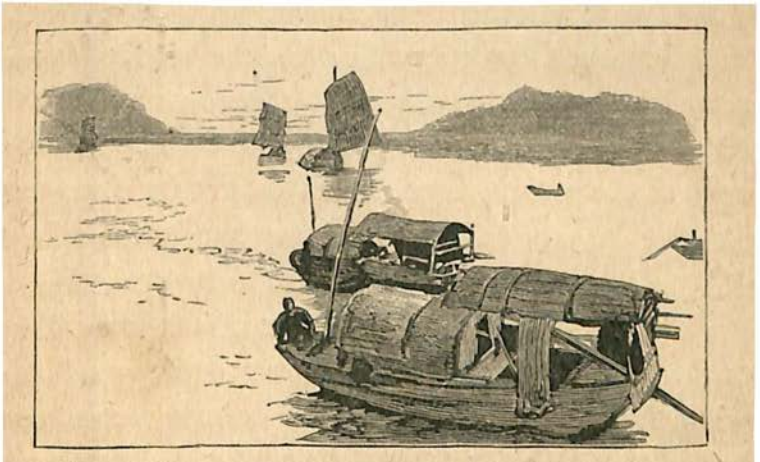
THE narrow margin along the sides of the river, which alone allows of cultivation, proves that, populous as the province of Kwang-tung is, the reputedly great wealth of the province depends chiefly upon its foreign relations and trade, and that its large population is to be found mainly in the lower delta-lands of the Hsi-ho. The small area of cultivation on the river-side, a mere fringe compared to the mass of hilly country, bespeaks a hard and toilsome life for the peasant of the province.

The main means of livelihood is evidently the river itself. Although Nature has been unkind in its treatment of the soil, she has made some amends by giving to the inhabitants of "the Two Kwangs" a waterway such as the Hsi-ho. The innumerable craft on the river give evidence of the enormous carrying trade which must exist on this great artery and its branches of distribution.

The aspect of the banks constantly changes, and furnishes a panorama of ever-varying delight. Close to the village of Yong-lou-shan the river assumes broad proportions,—the hills retreating in confused masses on

either side,—and forms a loch some three miles in breadth, and of great beauty. The wild and bare hill-sides are relieved by verdant patches of cultivation, dotted here and there, and with brushwood and growths of graceful bamboo,—the lower slopes of the hills, as they reach the water-edge, being thickly wooded. It is a panorama of great beauty, and would compare favourably with any lake scene in Europe.

Most of the villages and towns are necessarily situated



CANTON RIVER BOATS.

on the level lands lying at the foot of the hills, but the charge of monotony or sameness, so often complained of in the aspect of the towns in the interior of China, cannot be made with regard to those on the borders of the West river. The straggling and irregular appearance of those we have passed,—with their tiled and thatched houses, the suburbs half hidden amongst groups of noble trees and graceful bamboo or fruit-trees, and the houses in front perched upon stone bases,

with projecting walls and stone steps,—break up the bank, and always present an artistic appearance. The hamlets, with their straw stacks and often a joss-house, have a romantic air, perched as they often are on the side of some hill-ridge, straggling down to the water edge, or else built into the hill-side, or nestling at its foot, hidden in foliage.

It is a matter of regret that the mountain sides, which stand out naked and bare, are not better wooded. The Chinese, with all their power of utilising every inch of available ground for cultivation on the level plains—no matter how small they may be—seem not to have the foresight to care for their forest-lands. The provincial people of the south are poor, and cannot be expected to look after the woods. It is the duty, and should be the policy, of the Imperial Government to undertake the task; and it seems passing strange that it should have abandoned a Department of Forestry—for one has existed—whilst Western countries, learning the many-sided advantages of clothing their hill-sides with timber, have only of late years adopted strict measures for the conservation of their forests.

With care and at no deterrent expense these hill-sides might be made to present a widely different appearance. Neither soil nor climate is antagonistic to a sturdy and rapid growth, as may be seen wherever the hills have not been totally denuded of their timber. No one can find fault, however, with the cultivation of the low lands. These are cared for to a degree that allows of no improvement; being artificially manured by these

A CHINESE JUNK.

(*To face p.* 63, Vol. I.)

most industrious and careful people. Nature aids them with her river floods, whose deposit, like that of the Nile or Irawaddy and similar rivers, helps them to produce crops which are truly marvellous.

Soon after leaving Fong-chuen, a beautifully situated village of no importance, a Customs station was passed; and soon after that, the boundary between the provinces of Kwang-tung and Kwang-si. In the afternoon, about a dozen miles farther on, we reached Wu-chau-fu, which lies on the north or left bank of the river. It has the reputation of being the most important place, commercially, on the West river between Canton and Yünnan.

There is nothing to interest the traveller in the town, except the signs of activity and bustle, which mean business. After the charmingly situated and picturesque towns and villages we had passed, it looked mean. Still the city, which is a walled one,—with about 30,000 inhabitants, numerous junks and other craft busy loading and trans-shipping, and the number of Customs stations—must be a place of commercial consequence. The business quarter lies close under the walls: for the levy of duties it commands a good position at the junction of the Fu-ho and West rivers.

We were stopped at each of the stations for salt, excise, and Customs; but, on sending in our cards, return cards were sent, and our boat was immediately allowed to pass on to the centre of the town. We halted here, in order to send our cards to the Prefect, asking him when it would be convenient for him to see

us, as I was anxious to visit him in regard to the placard affair. Shortly after, two officials,—one of them a military mandarin, wearing the blue button; and the other a subordinate civil official—probably the confidential "factotum" of the local great man, by courtesy called "Mr. Secretary,"—came to call. The great man was indisposed—a polite fiction, which we took at its real value.

After the usual initial *pourparlers*, the subject of the placard was introduced, and they were asked what credence was to be placed in the rumour—which we thought right that the Prefect should know. After seeing our passports and inspecting, from the outside, the letter of introduction from the Viceroy to the Sub-Prefect at Pe-sê, they said there was nothing in the rumour; that, if true, it was the work of some insignificant agitators, and that, if we were passing on to Pe-sê, and not landing at Tsun-chau-fu or Nan-ning, we might be as much at our ease as we chose about the matter. They said, however, that they would consult the Prefect and let us know his fiat.

The result was a visit from a third subordinate official, who did talkee-talkee for some time, and told us that the Prefect had ordered two policemen to be sent to accompany us, that no escort of a gunboat was necessary, and that there was nothing to fear. Captain Chow was in a terrible state. Later on in the evening, when we had finished dinner, news reached us that a gunboat—a very primitive affair—*was* to escort us! Captain Chow was delighted, and his heart was made

light; to use the Chinese phrase, he felt "like a sparrow (hopping) jumping." He was no longer responsible for the barbarians!

The captain of the gunboat turned up later, and we had some conversation with him; our cigarettes pleased him, but he made faces over the cigar. Chinese politeness, however, forbade him to throw it away.

CHAPTER XII.

Effects of the Taiping rebellion—Navigable by steamers—Heavy duties—The river Fu-ho—Dangers from pirates—Mutual protection—Piracy still rife on the West river—Grandeur of the Fu-ho river—The globe-trotter foiled—Forts, now robbers' dens—Boats for the rapids—Peeping ladies—Wu-chau boatmen in league with pirates—Police protection—Floating market—Rafts and boats—Island of Cheong-chow—Rocks and rapids—Fishing cairns—The Tung-tam Gorge—Absence of sameness in river.

THE city of Wu-chau-fu is said to have suffered very severely from the Taiping rebels, but has recovered faster than many other places in this and the neighbouring provinces. Steamers of very light draught can ascend to this place, but it is doubtful whether, even if the Chinese were favourable to the idea, the introduction of steamers at present would pay. A few shops, selling foreign goods, are to be seen, but the duties levied are perfectly prohibitory; and it is impossible for any real trade ever to spring into existence under the present system of protection, kept up at such a ruinous cost to the State.

The Fu-ho or Kwei river, as it is here called, which enters the main stream from the north above Wu-chau, is some 300 to 400 yards wide; by it ascent can be made to Kwei-lam-fu (Kwei-lin-fu), the provincial capital, which is distant some 300 miles from this.

The river is said, by those missionaries who have

travelled along it, to be still dangerous. Some few years ago it was notoriously so; and Mr. A. S. Bickmore, who crossed by this route to the Yangtze, in 1866, noticed how bad a reputation it then had; so much so, that boats would only leave Wu-chau when they could form a small fleet for mutual protection. Mandarins even have been known to be robbed repeatedly; but of late years this part of the province has been brought under better, though by no means safe, control.

From what we learned, the West river still retains the evil reputation which it earned at the time of the Taiping rebellion, as its birthplace. Robbery with violence, or *dacoity*, is still common, so the captain of the gunboat informed us; and the fact of the Prefect considering it necessary to despatch a gunboat with us, for our protection, proves that there is a considerable element of danger even for a boat of our size, with a large crew, and well armed.

The Fu-ho is said to be a stream of wild grandeur, full of rapids over which boats of only some six inches' draught can be towed with difficulty, and deep precipitous passes close in and overhang the river. The grandeur of these scenes will never be accessible to the globe-trotter, even in the distant future, for the river in this portion can never be made navigable for steam-traffic.

The highest peaks of the hill-sides are crowned by forts which, erected in the time of the Taiping *régime*, have since served as robbers' nests; from which sallies are made to pillage the neighbouring village, or the

passing boat, as occasion may best serve. Especially designed boats (for the rapids), high in front and stern, ply on the river. These draw only from nine to twelve inches of water.

On leaving Wu-chau, at dawn of day, we had some difficulty in extricating ourselves from the perfect block of boats which surrounded us on all sides; craft of various shapes, sizes, and descriptions. The windows of

A GAMBLING TABLE.

our neighbouring boats were close alongside of ours, and privacy had been out of the question the evening before, when boatmen kept curiously peeping in at the doors and windows, until the interesting show, which they witnessed gratis, was cut off from their gaze by the wooden shutters and barred doors.

The *hoi-polloi* of Wu-chau are said to be a disreputable gang composed of gamblers, thieves, and the worst class of boatmen. Many of them are said to be in league

with the gambling establishments, and also with the robbers on the river. Consequently, Wu-chau is by no means a sinecure to the local mandarin. However, we suffered in no way from the crowd or the *mauvais sujets* of the place, as we were protected by policemen overnight.

Moving away from Wu-chau very early, the busy stir of the place was noticeable at that hour; the market moored on scows near the bank; the length of rafts, reaching far away into the distance beyond the town; the innumerable craft, row upon row deep, lining the river bank, made up an interesting picture. The rafts, which we constantly met, were ingeniously put together, and each had its residence with wooden posts, framework, and thatch roofing covered with sawn planks laid horizontally. The lower portion of these rafts consisted of logs, while across them, as cross-ties, were stout scantlings, the upper tier being made up of planks.

Soon after passing the Fu-ho, the river divides, and we observed a fertile island—Cheong-chow—six miles in length and three in breadth; on the ridge skirting the southern, or right bank of the stream, a pagoda was seen. Soon after came the first of a series of rocks, which we encountered at intervals for a number of miles up the river. These rocks, sharp and rugged, occur in different places in varying numbers—from two to fifty, which we counted in one place. They form dangerous rapids, the water swirling through them with great violence. It is a wild sight, reminding one of Doré's landscapes. At this season, when the lowest water-level of the year

occurs, they stand well-exposed, but in the flood-time of the river they are concealed. On first approach, a curious sight meets the view of the traveller. A number of the rocks have been covered by the fishermen with cairns of stones, from which they cast their nets. The strange appearance of these uniform and conical-shaped cairns, standing in what looks like a perfect field of rocks, at once attracts attention. In one place, I believe, a man could wade across.

The island of Cheong-chow is a beautiful one, an oasis of rich and abundant cultivation, amidst a desert of wild and grand hill scenery. The cultivation, consisting of pleasant orchards and graceful bamboo-clumps, tempted one to land; but, alas! our time was limited; and the captain of the gunboat—unappreciative mortal—would, I fear, not have looked with a sympathising eye on our study of the beautiful.

Some few miles above the island we came to the Tung-tam-hap, or gorge, an imposing pass with three disagreeable-looking rocks in mid-stream; but the Shau-hing-hap had spoilt us for the present, in the way of such sights. Much of the scenery above the gorge is of great loveliness. In this wonderfully picturesque river, what has struck us more than anything else is the absence of sameness. The changing character of the hills, and their wooding, the constant windings in the river, the passes, the constantly occurring villages, and the craft with their various cargoes made the scene one of ever-varying delight and freshness.

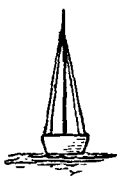
CHAPTER XIII.

Description of Chinese dress—"Bottomless breeches"—Pig-tails—Captain Chow's eyes twinkle—A visit to the gunboat—Illiterate Captain—A "joss-stick" watch—Tang-yuen—Unruly towns—Trade viâ Pak-hoi—Trans-shipment—Custom houses *en route* to Pak-hoi—The Court of Literature—Island of Tung-chow—Pawnbrokers—Mong-kong—Village schools—An arrant knave—Orchards and fruit-gardens—Food cheap, but not plentiful.

By this time we were getting quite accustomed to our Chinese dress, and beginning to wear it "to the manner born,"—no easy matter considering the complete metamorphosis one had to undergo. Our dress consisted of a pair of peculiarly loose white or blue cotton drawers, over which we drew a pair of silk salmon or yellow gaiters, high in front and low behind, tied round the ankle, producing the far from becoming appearance of "bottomless breeches" (much like those mentioned by Carlyle, in 'Sartor Resartus,' as an old German dress). We likewise wore Chinese stockings and shoes; a long blue coat, resembling strongly a night-gown, tied at the side, with a white jacket under; and over this a short, loose, padded silk jacket, with a collar which can be worn turned up or down. To crown all, each of us wore a skull-cap (in Chinese, 'cup-shaped hat'), to the underside of which, that indispensable item of the Chinaman, the queue or pig-tail, was attached.

For the sun, we had huge straw hats, thirty inches in diameter, which are heavy, and by no means so cool as the *solah topee*, or the Indian turban. Captain Chow greeted us each morning with a pleasant smile, and his eye twinkled when he saw that the passing boatmen or villagers on the bank hardly ever turned round, when before they had evinced such an amount of curiosity as caused him uneasiness. I feel sure that he chuckled heartily when he thought how the people failed to recognise in those two sedate, elderly sons of Ham sitting on the deck, with instruments concealed from view, the two wild foreign devils whom it was his remunerative but anxious duty to convey up the river.

We paid a visit to the gunboat one evening. It was a trim-looking boat, with—for a Chinese craft—sharp lines; it had a tall mast, and was evidently designed for speed. The only accommodation on board was a small cabin near the stern, which belonged to the captain, who was a sort of non-commissioned officer of the military contingent. The most prominent things to be seen on board, were three old cannon of English manufacture,—one marked O L D, which it certainly was,—and the flags on which are shown the camp they come from. The men were not in uniform, but the boat was tolerably tidy, with the exception of a bundle of dried ducks—most unpleasant things for the eye to dwell upon—and some pork, hardly less sightly.



The captain was a plain-mannered old gentleman of no great culture, for his Mandarin was execrable, and,

when he was asked to write down the name of a town which was ahead, we felt quite sorry to see him break down, and wished, for his sake, that, "to read and write comes by nature," as Dogberry said. Guard is kept by watch, which is timed by the burning of a joss-stick (shing-tsu) or "fragrant stick," on which is marked with black dots the duration of the watch.

The following day we passed, early in the morning, several islands with reefs of rocks showing above the water-level; and above these Tang-yuen (Tang-hien), situated on the right or southern bank of the stream. This place has the reputation of being unruly, but that is nothing remarkable on a river where such is the rule and not the exception. Such places are "thick as autumnal leaves in Vallambrosa."

A petty trade is carried on between Pak-hoi, on the Tonquin Gulf (a treaty port), and this place, by means of creek communication, with a break of one day's journey for trans-shipment between Wu-lin-chau and Peh-liu. The creeks only allow of small craft, however; and the length — owing to the very winding nature of the channels—and trans-shipment at Wuh-lin-chau makes this trade-route unimportant and incapable of great improvement.

The distance from Pak-hoi is about equi-distant with that to Canton, but from the latter place the journey takes longer, owing to the strong current which has to be contended with. Lekim and Customs duties are levied in the same ratio, that is at *four* places between Pak-hoi and Tang-yuen. The town is remarkable only

for its background of red sandstone hills and a five-storied pagoda close by, on the opposite side of the river. Near a small village is situated a temple named Mau-cheong-mieu, or "Court of Literature."

We next sailed past the island of Tung-chow (about one-third of a mile in length), and some ten miles above it, the town of Mong-kong, situated on the north bank; an unimportant place, noticeable for the more than usually prominent pawnbroker's shop, standing square and grim, high above all other dwellings, like a portion of some feudal keep. Mong-kong is a mean, unwalled town, with no trade; it has a poverty-stricken look about it, and does not boast a civil mandarin, the Lekim official being in charge. This place also is "unruly," for the gunboat captain, who has been visiting us, showed us his letter of instructions from the Wu-chau Prefect, in which Mong-kong received the distinction of being mentioned as a place where we should be discouraged from landing; and if we did land, that a guard should be sent with us in uniform, a touching piece of solicitous care! Evidently, Kwang-si is true to its evil reputation.

To give the devil his due, however, even in Kwang-si each village, almost every cluster of houses, has its village school, a point to be noted in favour of the Canton province.

If Mong-kong has nothing attractive in itself, it has the advantage of lying in the most wonderful scenery. Built upon a small bit of plain, where the hills recede from the river, it has a background of red hills; while

to the eastward, range upon range meets the view. On the other side of the river the hills reach the water-edge in several places; meeting the water in water-worn bluffs, round which the river runs swift and strong.

Notwithstanding the low price of the main staples of food on this river, we were disagreeably surprised by the amount of our bill, the more so as we had laid in a stock of stores of every sort on leaving Canton.

A VILLAGE SCHOOL-HOUSE.

The wonderful facility with which a Chinaman can manipulate a bill beats anything I have ever experienced in any part of the world. One gets at last to think of China as Hamlet did of his native country—

> "There's ne'er a villain, dwelling in all Denmark,
> But he's an arrant knave."

We had fish often, though not every day; some

varieties very good, Kim-yü especially, a speckled fish, somewhat like trout; and nearly all were free from the tastelessness which I have heard complained of in Chinese fish.

A few miles further on fruit became comparatively abundant, and orchards, which are not met with in the lower portions of the river, became frequent. Most of the villages, *en route*, had a few straggling fruit-trees planted round the suburbs, but we now, for the first time, met with fruit-gardens, producing oranges, lichee, pomelo, and a fruit called yang-t'o (carambola). Sugar-cane we have found in abundance; but this being early spring, we had, to our regret, seen nothing of the plums, peaches, melons, pears, and mangoes, wongpee (yellow skin), lung-ngan and pootoo, a species of grape.

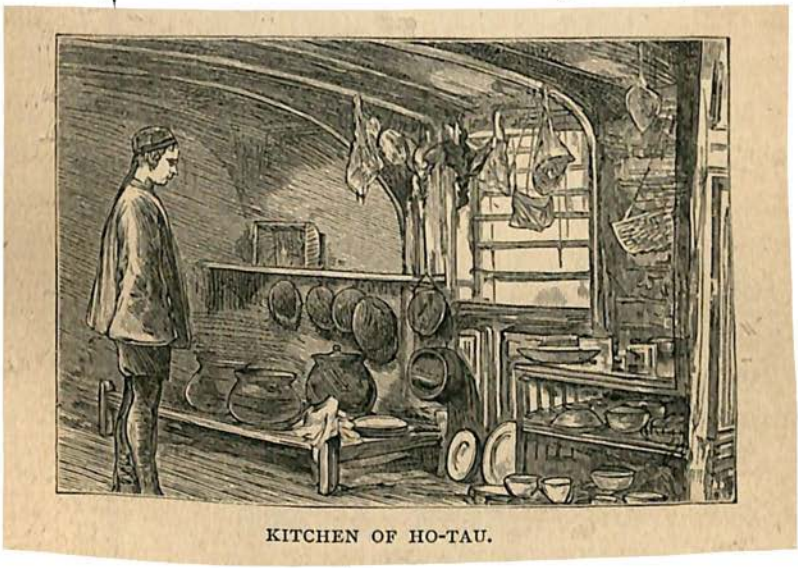
As one ascended the river, the cultivation of rice became scarcer. Indian corn seemed to be the staple food, along with pumpkins, which are suitable to the capabilities of the small amount of culturable land to be found in this mountainous province. Pork, poultry, eggs, and firewood were not dear.

Though food was of moderate price, it is important to note that it was by no means plentiful; and on the river, as we found on our overland journey, it is advisable to replenish the larder at the larger towns; this could only be done on market days, which were held here every five days.

CHAPTER XIV.

Hardships in Burmah—Our Chinese Chef—Sulphurated eggs—A concession—Chinese maligned—Food of the people—A fairy scene—Wang-po-chow—Pak-ma-hü—Saddle Mountain—Change of scenery—Molam-hü—Swiftness of stream—Slow progress—A tabula rasa—Height of floods—Deserted river—Wild scenery.

ACCUSTOMED as I have been to rougher modes of travel, and infinitely worse fare in other lands, notably in Burmah, our life on the river was comparatively one of



KITCHEN OF HO-TAU.

luxury; but our cuisine would, I fear, hardly recommend itself to fastidious Western palates. Pork in various forms was naturally a favourite with our Chinese *chef*; "an he could he would" have served nothing else.

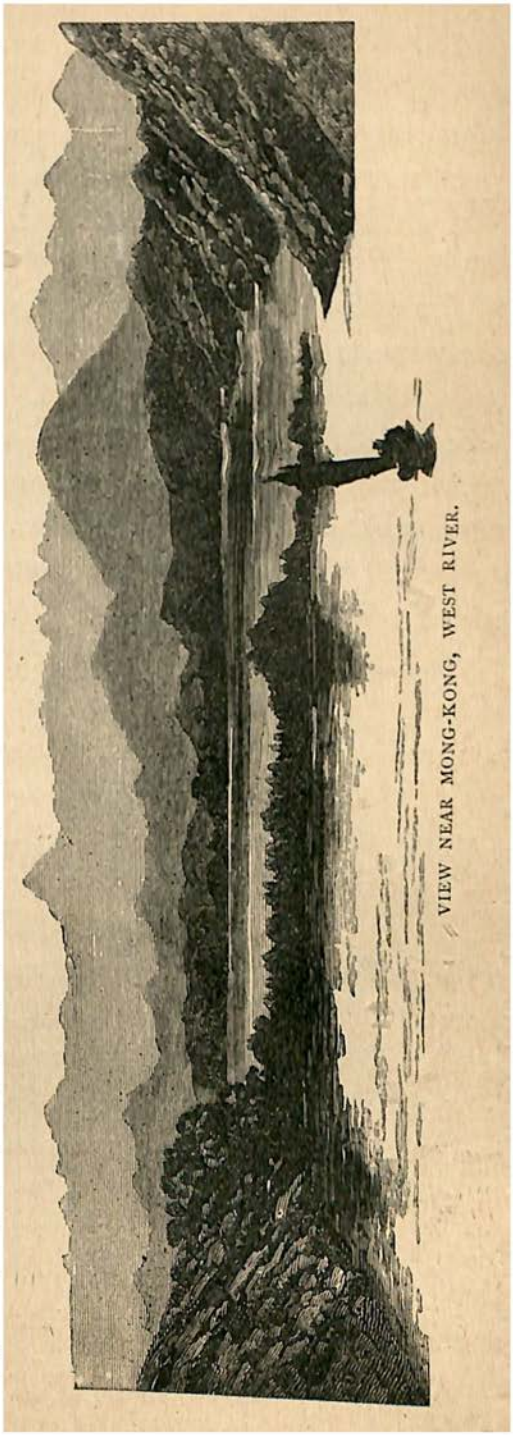
But as stewed pork, roast pork, pork sausages (terrible things they are!) and pig's-foot *gelée* are apt to pall upon the uncultivated Western palate, we were forced to enter a protest against the too frequent repetition of these Chinese dainties; and in this matter to exercise an amount of firmness hardly befitting the subject. We had a hard struggle with the cook, but he relaxed so far as to vary the pork *menu* with dried duck and salt eggs. He, however, spared us that favourite *morceau* with the Chinese, the pi-tan, or sulphurated eggs. Shark's fin and bird's-nest were, of course, rare dainties, not for us.

However, to be serious, Chinese food is by no means the horrible mess which Europeans generally believe it to be. Its bad reputation has not been altogether justly earned. The ideas that people at home have on this subject are equalled only by the other absurd notions entertained in regard to the Chinese. The fixed impression in England is that puppy-dog, cat and rat, and so on, form articles of the daily *menu*. This, of course, is utterly absurd.

A few of the very poorest class in Canton do eat them, it is true. The food of a poor family is usually rice, with a bowl of soup to wash it down; something salt and tasty as a condiment; pork, vegetables and macaroni,—curry being unknown! With the wealthier the fare is rich soup, oyster or shell-fish; pork (stewed or otherwise), fish, boiled fowl, roast duck and vegetables. With the poorest people, rice and salt cabbage or salt fish, with a *suspicion* of pork only, is the daily ration. Our

boatmen do not belong to the latter category; as the Canton boatmen are, I believe, better off than others. Their *chow*, or food, which we saw in passing, often looked by no *means* bad; eleven hours' work would make me relish it, I am sure;—though I confess that a trial did not prepossess me in its favour!

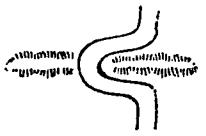
On leaving Mong-kong, before day broke, I sat for some time on the deck, watching one of the most wonderful prospects it has been my lot to witness. Winding through a perfect maze of rugged and jagged rocks, and swirling rapids, the river here, close on a mile and a half wide, has the appearance of



VIEW NEAR MONG-KONG, WEST RIVER.

a succession of lochs, losing themselves in a background of densely clad hills. Behind these again come range upon range of mountains, the whole set in a soft silver-grey vapoury light. It looked like some fairy scene—one of those lovely vistas which touch the heart. A few minutes later, the sun rose red, over the bluffs on the southern bank, and bathed the whole scene in its clear morning light; the grey lights faded away and we sailed up the gleaming river. The prospect was still beautiful, but the subtle attraction of the dawn was fled.

After bidding farewell to Mong-kong, several islands were noticed; the largest of these, Wang-po-chow, being remarkable for its rich verdure and cultivation, amongst which nestle several villages. The scenery here again is remarkable. The eye is at once attracted by the ruins of a pagoda, built in a commanding situation on a mountain range, overlooking the river east and west. Looking from above or below, the range seems to cross the river, and probably did at one time.



The town of Pak-ma-hü, a wretched little place, where markets are held, and whose sole importance lies in its Lekim station, lies beautifully situated a few miles further on. When approaching the town, and for a long distance beyond it, the Ma-ow-shan or Saddle Mountain, well-named, attracted our attention. A complete alteration now takes place in the character of the country. The river is no longer flanked by the bold hills and ranges, which retire from the river, and are soon lost to sight. Mo-lam-hü, a village situated on the right bank, a few miles further on, is remarkable only

as being in communication by a creek with Tai-wu, the great cassia market of Kwang-si.

We noticed the rapid rate at which the boats on their way down the river swept past, as it was a great contrast to our own annoyingly slow pace, creeping along, as we did, three miles an hour; and at the rapids sometimes remaining *in situ quo*, all the men on the track-rope until, inch by inch, the ho-tau, quivering in every plank, moved slowly forward. The difference in the rate of progress either way seemed to be in the ratio of one to three in the present season, while in time of floods it must be more striking.

In the evening, on asking the captain of the gun-boat for general information, we found his mind seemingly a *tabula rasa*. The unwillingness of the Chinese to impart information is covered by a pretended inability. When questioned as to how long it took him from one village to another, he brightened up; he was on safe ground now, and could satisfy his Chinese politeness, without parting with anything of value, in the way of information. What had taken us seven hours to accomplish he hoped to do on his return in three.

If the traveller thinks with a sigh, as we did, of the rapid journeying down stream, the dangers increase, it must be remembered, in the same ratio. The ordinary floods rise 30 feet, and during heavy floods, according to the strength and duration of the rains in the west and north-west of Kwang-si, they rise from 50 to 70 feet above the winter level. In heavy flood the rapids and rocks, which made our dangers, are hidden beneath

the waters and despised, but the currents are terrible. It may be imagined what a source of terror and dread these floods are to the people along this river; to the agriculturist equally with those earning their livelihood on its waters. The power and fury of the stream at such a season must tax the nerve of the pluckiest and toughest of its boatmen.

The number of craft on the river was fewer as we ascended. There was nothing more of the stir seen on the portion below Wu-chau. The deserted appearance of this highway, the wild scenery through which we were passing, and the unpleasant reputation which the few towns we met possessed, made this part of the voyage anything but inspiriting. The grandeur of the scenery, however, and the feeling that we were advancing over new ground, more than compensated for all.

CHAPTER XV.

Mo-lam-hü—Tam-chuk—Another bad place—Rumours—A local fair—Poverty of the people—Pagodas—Ping-nan-yuen—A stationary ferry—A beautiful panorama—Taiping rebels—A cut-off—Caves—The "Jumping Tiger" rapids—A canoe as a gunboat—Tai-wong-kong—An escort refused—Turbulent crowd—The Cymbal of the Oppressed—Taken for missionaries—Suspicion allayed—Irksome presents—A veneer of indifference.

THE river above Mo-lam-hü takes a sharp sweep and, soon after, the little town of Tam-chuk, on the left bank, is reached. There we anchored for the night. Market was being held when we passed, but as this was another "bad" place, being doubly famous for its outrages, we considered it wiser not to land; especially as the dirty appearance of the village seemed to promise few inducements, excepting the market, which we luckily could behold from the ho-tau, without attracting notice.

As we approached, we could see the banks lined with people, and a mass of boats along the shore; while from time to time sounds of Chinese music (gong, drum and cymbal) greeted our ears. The captain showed some uneasiness; no doubt due to the rumours which we had heard were floating about, news having been carried up the river of our approach.

An unpleasant reception was by no means a remote contingency at one of the many bad places on the river,

and we ourselves felt relieved to find the crowd was only the local fair. The scene was a busy one, the hundred boats of different sorts, from the common "dug-out" to larger craft, conveying merchandise; the people busy chaffering, moving here and there, dressed in jacket and loose trousers of dark and light blue cotton stuff of local manufacture, and all with their ts'ao-maos (bamboo sun-hats).

In front of the dark grey background of the village, near the top of the bank, were ranged the large baskets in which were placed for sale the main articles of food and dress. These were few enough, and with them were the odds and ends usually required locally; the arrangement was very much the same as at some small Scotch fairs. Here the gossips gather and discuss affairs, amongst which we, no doubt, prominently figured: marriages are arranged; transfers of land effected; servants hired; and the most important business of the little community is settled. These poor people wear the same clothes all the year round. They have no gaiters but only sandals of straw. Base-ball was being played by a group of urchins on the bank; we had noticed this going on in several places.

After leaving Mo-lam-hü there was little that was noticeable except two pagodas of five stories each; they are polygonal, the conventional form common in South-Eastern China, with the tiers decreasing in breadth and height towards the top. A little further on we came to the town of Ping-nan-yuen (Ping-nan-hien), situated on the north side of the river—and remarkable for its flights

of massive stone steps, which wind down to the river-edge on either side of a creek above the town. On the west side a magnificent boulder forms an abutment.

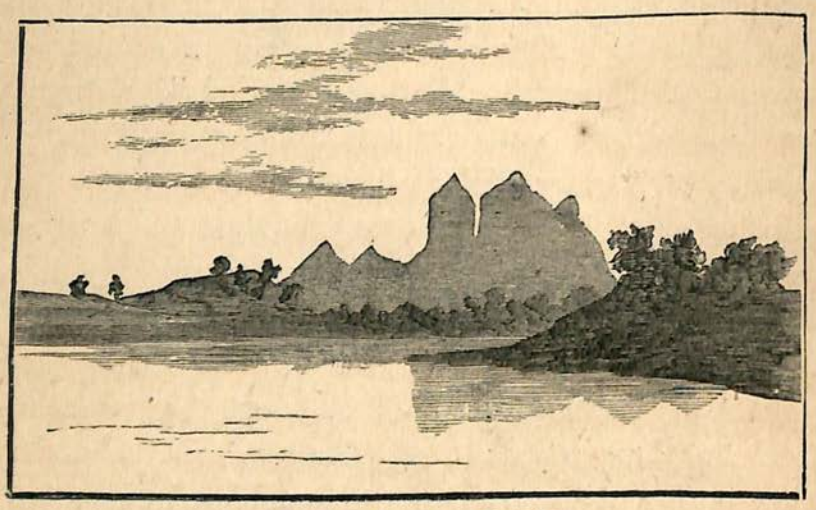
The crossing of the creek was effected by means of a stationary ferry, constructed by the simple means of a canoe anchored in mid-stream, from which planks are laid either way to the stone steps; but the abrupt manner in which the southern stair is broken off reveals the remains of an abutment of a former bridge, which stood here. Our limited time did not permit us to discover how and when the bridge had been carried away, for the acquisition of the most ordinary information is, in this province, a lengthy affair; all we could learn was the valuable information; which was plainly enough before our eyes, that a bridge once had stood there!

Ping-nan, which lies in an amphitheatre, well cultivated, enveloped amongst trees of fine foliage, and groups of feathery bamboo, is happily without any Lekim or Customs stations. The town has fine granite walls and brick ramparts, of the usual description; from which, we were told, a beautiful panorama is to be viewed; and this can readily be believed. These walls were levelled by the Taiping rebels and the greater part of the town destroyed.

Above Ping-nan, the river is full of bends, and in one place it has made a "cut-off" behind a reef of rocks, which stand in places thirty feet out of the water, cropping out of the bank. In these honeycombed rocks there is a tendency to cave-formation. Shortly after this, we came to the Ku-yung rapids; next a

number of rocks; and then another series of rapids, amongst the worst on the river, namely, the Fu-loong-tan, Loong-mun-tan, and the Fu-ten-tan or, as it is graphically named, "Jumping Tiger" rapid.

Our gunboat, little as it resembled a war-vessel, had now altered into a still less formidable instrument of war, in the shape of a large canoe, carrying some six men. In the prow was placed, for mere appearance



VIEW OF THE PAK-SHIK-SHAN.

sake, a tiny cannon of antique birth, with a bore of one inch. The gun must have been meant mainly for "moral" persuasion, as one discharge would probably have sunk the canoe, if one might judge from appearances. If their valour had not been too discreet, we might perhaps have had an opportunity of witnessing the discharge,—and its effect. Admirable views of the Pak-shik-shan, or "White Stone Mountain," are obtained from this neighbourhood.

Tai-wong-kong we reached on the evening of our New-Year's day, soon after passing the last-mentioned rapid. It has the usual Lekim, Customs and Salt stations, and is a town of some trade importance, containing a number of substantial shops; the number of large craft and sampans, lying off the bank, gave it an air of bustle, such as we had lately been unaccustomed to.

During the evening we learned that our gun-canoe was not to go further; so I sent the tin-chai, with my card, to the Prefect with a message, saying that the Wu-chau Prefect had sent an escort thus far with us. I thought it right to communicate with him on the subject, leaving it to him to judge whether any was necessary or not.

At the entrance to every yamen in China there stands a gong, called the "Cymbal of the Oppressed," and when an injustice has been committed the victim is allowed to sound it. Captain Chow told us the drum was never sounded nowadays! We threatened to furnish a modern precedent if we did not receive a proper escort. The tin-chai, whose discretion was beyond all praise, *next* day informed me that, after landing, a crowd was gathering, and by the time he reached the yamen had become dense; each trying to jostle past the other to hear the interview between the magistrate and himself, the authorities not attempting to keep the crowd in order.

The passports inspected, eager questions were shouted as to what we were going to do at Tai-wong. On the

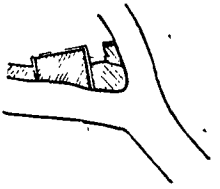
tin-chai answering that we were English gentlemen of the literati class, on our way to Yünnan, for the object of gaining information like their own savants (Heaven forgive the slyness!), the reply was received with derision; and the rabble roared out, "They are two missionaries who are come to build a church here!" The tin-chai explained that we were not desirous of even landing at Tai-wong, and that we were going straight to Yünnan. On the magistrate's seeing the Viceroy's letter to the Prefect at Pe-sê, the tin-chai was advised to go no further! In the end the news spread that we were not missionaries, and the people were quieted. The magistrate, however, begged us not to land, as the people were unmanageable, and there might be some danger of a riot.

The system of presents or *pourboires*, which it is the custom to give, made our visit from the accompanying gunboat every evening a heavy tax, and one on which we had not counted. One evening the captain, who paid us a visit, was shown a pocket-compass, some of which we had brought for presents. He looked the instrument over with true Chinese imperturbability. The river required no such things, he said. Local knowledge was necessary, and this was certainly quite true! However, under all this veneer of indifference or *sang froid*, which they cultivate, it is hard to believe that there does not lie a certain amount of intelligence and shrewdness; which they will not allow to appear.

CHAPTER XVI.

Tsun-chau-fu—Junction with the Pak-ho—A river-face-wall—The "Sun-lit Lotus" pagoda—Skill and agility of boatmen—Dangers of river—A crash—Passage of rapids—Propitiating the river gods—Offerings to ancestors—Hardships of the Chinese peasant—Air of decay—The "Mandarin's Purse"—Captain Chow's return—"The only door."

LEAVING Tai-wong, the river runs suddenly southwards in great bends, and in the afternoon we reached Tsun-chau-fu (Tsun-chau-fu), a prefectural town, often locally called Kwei-ping, from the name of its district, and which is situated on the north bank, close to its junction with the Pak-ho or North river, which here joins it.



The character of the river, before reaching Tsun-chau-fu, is marked by the numbers of rapids, exposed banks of sand and shingles, and very rugged massive and stone banks, which make the short stage slow and tedious. Just before reaching the city, the southern bank is formed of immense tiers of stone, laid in horizontal strata, making a magnificent face-wall, around which the stream swirls and rushes past at a furious pace.

At the commencement of the stone-face, a mile and a half below the city, stands, in a prominent position, the Yeong-lan-tap, or "Sun-lit Lotus" pagoda, a hand-

some nine-storied polygonal pagoda, whose name may be recommended by æsthetic readers.

The skill and agility of the boatmen extorted our admiration though in a time of emergency they might, judging from the difficulties which we had in our navigation up stream at the least dangerous time of the year, be found wanting, I sadly fear. Although the flood-time, with the immense volume of water which has to be carried off through such contracted channels as the Shau-hing gorge, is the season to be feared, the winter is not to be treated with disdain; seeing that the lower level of the river brings its element of danger in the exposure of the rugged rocks and rapids with which it abounds.

The immense pace at which the waters are whirled through these broken reefs or rocks, swirling and foaming past through tortuous channels, only known to men having intimate acquaintance with them, makes it a matter of great difficulty to keep control over the boat. They manage, however, with great dexterity, by means of a huge oar-helm worked over the bow, and a correspondingly large rudder at the stern.

Accidents are numerous, from all accounts, and we often had ocular evidence before us, in the wrecks of junks and rafts stranded on the river bank. We were once swept round by a powerful current, with irresistible force, against which the immense leverage of our two helms was powerless, and were dashed with a crash against a rock. Luckily, our ho-tau was provided with two large side-booms, about 9 inches in diameter, reach-

ing the length of the boat, which in this case broke the shock.

Often in making our very slow progress up some rapid, or rounding some rock-bound corner, past which the current ran like a mill-stream, the eleven men comprising our crew were to be seen, straining every muscle in their bodies, and with hardly any result. At these times,

THE GODDESS OF SAILORS.

Captain Chow invariably had recourse to a practice common amongst all the watermen in China. Paper offerings, kept in a special box next the stern, were taken out and scattered on the water, as a propitiation to the spirit of the river. These papers, offered by various classes of Chinamen to their different deities, are commonly known by Europeans under the name of Joss papers.

Although it is ludicrous to witness the careful way in which these poor boatmen invariably make these supposititious money sacrifices to their water deity—for each of these papers represents either gold or silver money, according as they have gold or silver foil attached to them—still with them it is not more absurd than the custom prevalent amongst western sailors, of whistling for the wind!

The Chinese sacrifice is not an expensive one, for economy is looked to, not only in counterfeiting money in paper, for which the very slenderest, tiny patch of the silver or gold suffices. Fowls are constantly offered to their deities by the boatmen; but as they are as constantly eaten, the sacrifice is not costly.

With these boatmen, as with other ignorant classes in China, these offerings are made in the spirit of *sacrifice*. The origin of the custom may not be from devil-worship, or the doctrine of fear, but from hero-worship, or of love and reverence. In the case of parents and ancestors a similar offering is made, and the custom seems to me anything but laughable or despicable, if any consideration be given to its meaning; the sentiment appears to be not without beauty.

The entrance to the Pak-ho, where it joins the main West river at Tsun-chau-fu, exhibits a scene of wild grandeur; this is its character along its whole course from its source in the province of Kwei-chau. The river runs through a succession of rocks, rapids and sandbanks, the whole length being through wild mountainous country. From the accounts which we received,

the scenery must be wildly beautiful; but of all information, this is perhaps the most difficult to obtain. For the people—poor and overworked as they are, finding it hard to procure fuel and rice—life is but a galling load; they have neither spirit nor time for the enjoyment of scenery.

Tsun-chau-fu is a walled city, of considerable area, on the apex of the junction of the West river and the Pak-ho. Its principal suburb is on the West river, the other on the Pak-ho. The villages forming the suburbs are larger than the town itself. The business part lies, as usual, *extra muros*. The city shows signs yet, though it has partly been rebuilt, of the cruel treatment which it received at the hands of the merciless Taiping rebels. Its large area, the many ruins, the gardens laid waste, the fish-ponds and the enclosures of official yamens, speak to the importance of the place at one time. Notwithstanding the considerable number of cargo-junks and other craft lying off the town, and the statement that the local trade is considerable, the city has an air of decay. It is hard to believe that any trade done in the place, or passing it, is not of the most meagre kind.

On both rivers, next the outlying suburbs of the town, there are the usual Customs, Lekim and Salt stations. When one sees the vast number of these stations occurring at short, regular, intervals, along each of the waterways, each with the number of attachés or subordinates seemingly necessary to any official establishment in China, one is forced to ask whether the game can be worth the candle. The "squeeze" on goods must be

something enormous. It is useless to make inquiry or to examine the official tariffs of rates levied, for by these means no clue can be found to the charges made. The regular dues, heavy as they are, are by no means all; a generous allowance must be made for the "Mandarin's Purse," as the official perquisites are called. One does not require any strong imaginative faculty to understand how easy under such a system it must be to "squeeze." Captain Chow, when I asked him one day how long he expected to take from Pak-shik or Pe-sê to Canton, replied, "twenty days, if I am not detained at the stations; but probably thirty, as I shall have no English mandarin on board." When I laughingly suggested that perhaps a *douceur* might expedite matters he grinned, and said, "yes, but I am a poor man!"

There seems to be little opening for trade in this wretchedly poor country (one vast region of mountains, with here and there patches of cultivation along its great water-way, more than five-sevenths of its area being hill), and so long as these heavy duties and squeezes are levied, so long will "*the only door*," as the Chinese aptly call monopoly, be an insurmountable barrier.

CHAPTER XVII.

"Body-protecting charms"—An escort granted—Lawless populace—The birthplace of the placards—Head-money—Inflammatory placard—Officials fearing the people—Hostility of townspeople, and friendliness of villagers—Crowds in Kwang-si dangerous—Advice to travellers.

ON arrival we sent in our "body-protecting charms" (by which grandiloquent phrase my readers will hardly recognise our passports) to the Prefect of Tsun-chau-fu, with my card and a message,—after the formula described already, as having been used at Tai-wong,—to ask whether a gunboat was necessary. The tin-chai, who went with them, was likewise armed with the despatch from the Viceroy to the Pe-sê Sub-Prefect, in order to show it, if wanted. An hour afterwards he returned; and swiftly, on his heels almost, followed a gunboat and some policemen to keep guard overnight.

The Tai-wong episode had been repeated here, only the people were more clamorous, and the Prefect was greatly pleased when he heard that we were not going to land. He dwelt eloquently upon the lawless character of the people, and evidently had quite enough to do without having two foreigners to protect—a task not likely to be much to his taste, when they had the reputation of being missionaries.

Luckily, in my passport I had been described as an officer of the Indian Government though, in some

respects, I doubt this being an advantage, for the Chinese officials have a suspicion, difficult to eradicate, in reference to the name Government of India! But the suspicions of Chinamen are not to be wondered at, when French gentlemen, fellow-passengers on the way out, used to shrug their shoulders when I maintained that I was not on a Government expedition. Tsun-chau-fu was the place mentioned, lower down the river, as being the birthplace of the inflammatory placard issued in regard to us, in which the flattering price of 200 taels was placed on our heads.

This place divides with Nan-ning the questionable honour of being the worst place on the Si-kiang, at least the most inimical to the Fan-qui-lo, and this on a river where towns of bad repute are as numerous as, to quote a Chinese proverb, "white pigs in Shantung." It is the identical spot from which in 1870 a similar production, but altogether milder in tone, was issued, a copy of which was procured by Mr. Moss, on his unsuccessful attempt to penetrate to the head of the West river in that year. That document, which is evidently the handiwork of uneducated people, from the style of it, unless the manner of illiterate writing were intentionally assumed, runs as follows:—

23rd June, 1870.

"It is well known that those people who do not belong to our race are of a different mental constitution from ourselves. Now there is this red-haired devil who comes from afar to spy out our cities and towns,

coming and going repeatedly; and as for us, the magistrates and gentry, we have treated him kindly. But he (in spite of our kindness) dares to tarry and loiter about; and he certainly has some other object in view. We think his intention is, without doubt, to settle down here in order to propagate his religion and deceive the common people. If, however, this false religion once spreads abroad, our doctrine of the sages will be obscured, and the harm it will do is incalculable. This is to give notice that the whole united population of the district will assemble at an early day in the city to drive him out of our boundaries. If he understands the consequences and flees away soon, he will avoid encountering the hands of the whole enraged people. If he obstinately refuses to pay attention to this and continues to anchor in the T'sam Kong river, then this boat of his shall be utterly burnt to ashes. This announcement is made publicly by the (people of the) whole district on the 25th day of the 5th month of the 9th year of Tung-che."

The farther we proceeded up the river, the more it became evident how slender a hold the official class has upon the people in Kwang-si. In Kwang-tung this was noticeable, but in this province it was still more marked. The control exercised in most parts of China at the present day by the officials, if making no pretence at an attempt to earn the affection of the people, aims at respect, and seldom fails to secure a feeling of fear. Even this latter feeling was absent here.

The poverty-stricken people of this province which,

in addition to the wildness of its natural scenery, has an air of desolation cast over it, have always had the reputation of being a lawless and turbulent people, often in anarchy and open rebellion. The frequent collisions and outbreaks between the people and authorities shows the antagonistic feeling which exists between them. Instead of the people fearing the officials, the latter fear the populace. This is undoubtedly the case in Kwang-si, where an assumed contempt for the people, coupled with their arbitrary sway, is merely a thin cover for a lively apprehension, which it is impossible not to recognise.

The inhabitants of the villages and hamlets which we visited were invariably not only wanting in rude or insulting behaviour, but were friendly. We often in the evening strolled through the village close by; visited whatever was to be seen, and sat down under some tree to have a talk with the few people who might be about, and we always found them inclined to be civil. Our experience was that in the country or villages one can, if in Chinese dress, saunter about without being molested, or receiving any but fair treatment, so long as you do not attempt to use instruments, and so long as you respect their prejudices. In the towns it is another story. There you not only have a different class; but you have them not in units, as in the villages or hamlets, but *en masse*. A Chinese mob is always to be dreaded, and its temper is most uncertain, and you never can tell what the day may bring forth, especially in Kwang-si, the most dangerous of all Chinese provinces.

The best advice to the traveller in these regions is to avoid all cities and towns, especially on fête or market-days. If he is not prepared to do that, he must expect to be insulted, probably stoned, and the affair might possibly not end there. The incautious traveller had better stay at home.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"Mandarin," the Court language—Nasal tone of the Cantonese—Local patois — Cantonese traders in towns — Old cannon — Theatre—Gambling houses — Thieves — A sulky servant — Good riddance—Fishermen pigging it—Chinese New Year's Eve—Rice wine—The national drink—Literary topers—New Year—Unexpected cleanliness—Paper invocations—Plum-blossom—Sainted Worthies—The Whitestone Mountain—A chat with villagers—The "Bone-catcher"—An idyll.

THE *Kwan-hwa*, or so-called "Mandarin" dialect, which is the Court language, is studied and known by all men having pretence to accomplishments or cultivation throughout the empire, and differs widely from provincial dialects, but most of all from that of the Cantonese, who speak even the Mandarin with the harsh and nasal tones of their own dialect. I may note here that the term Mandarin, as an equivalent for official, is unknown amongst the Chinese. It has been so constantly applied by Europeans in this sense, that its use by a travel writer cannot be avoided.

In Kwang-si, again, the principal feature is the change of the abrupt vowel terminations as, loh, kiah, pih into the well-defined consonants k, p, t, as lok, kap, pit, a change that considerably facilitates the discrimination of the syllables. This dialect is, however, on this account easier for foreigners to acquire than Mandarin. Each district has a local *patois*, called *Hiang-tan*, a village brogue, for the thorough understanding of which

A STREET FORTUNE-TELLER. (*To face p.* 101, Vol. I.)

local interpreters are needed, and made use of in the local Courts.

The dialect was noticeably altering fast where we now were, and only one-half could be understood by the tin-chai, a Cantonese, and a man of intelligence. As an example of the great difference between Cantonese and Mandarin, I give the following:—

Canton,	"Pak-wa,"	The Plain Speech.
Court,	"Kwan-hwa,"	
Canton,	"Ko tik mai yau sha tsoi noi."	The rice has sand in it.
Court,	"Na ko mai yau sha soi noi."	

In the larger towns we had passed, the more important trade is in the hands of Cantonese, and only the smaller in that of natives of the province. Mr. Hong-beng-kaw took a stroll in Tsun-chau-fu, and gave us an account of what he saw in the evening. In the city an instruction hall, of flimsy structure, was being erected, the only imposing thing being two stone lions at its portal. Old cannon, as is usual in all walled towns, were lying about half buried. No cannon were to be seen mounted, and altogether the military preparations, although there is a garrison, were nil.

On the shore we noticed the scaffold of a temporary wooden theatre, in preparation for the New Year festivities. Gambling-houses were plentiful, and in full swing. The appearance of the place was not so picturesque, and the streets and hongs were not so substantial and well-finished as at Wu-chau; the place in fact had an air of poverty and the people a look of vagabondism, difficult to describe but easy to recognise.

We had in a small way to suffer,—notwithstanding our police guard or, as Charles Wahab cynically suggested, perhaps on account of it,—from the visit of some "three pairs of hands," as the Chinese call a thief. He luckily contented himself with a brass washing-basin and some carbolic soap, which the servants had probably left lying about.

At Tsun-chau-fu we lost a servant who had been engaged by Mr. Hong-beng-kaw—a sharp and intelligent boy, but with a disagreeably sulky manner, which was almost sullen at times. Having received an advance of twenty dollars and being under no written agreement, he evidently thought the expedition, the farther he got from Canton, less to his liking, and considered it advisable to return with his two months' pay, after a few weeks of work. An insubordinate servant is out of the question on such a journey as ours, so we were glad to send him about his business.

The fishing-rafts met with on the river have the appearance of huge floating cranes, until you are close by. They consist of long bamboo rafts, on which are reared huge bamboo shears, from which fishing-nets are worked. At one end of the raft is erected the dwelling-place, where the fishermen live. The huts are wretched structures of bamboo and leaf into which it must be difficult to creep. They are hardly fit for habitation by human beings, and are more like pig-styes. The fishermen are weather-beaten looking, hardy men.

The evening of the 17th of February was the Chinese New Year's Eve, and we had all the accompaniments of

that festival. The explosion of crackers and the clamour of gongs went on all day while a big dinner, at which some local dainties appeared, was served to the men, with an allowance of *shiu-chiu*, or heated rice-wine, which was supplemented by a small addition from us.

The term *sam-shu*, by which the liquor is commonly known amongst Europeans, is said to be derived from *sam-chiu*, or "thrice fired," but this is doubtful. The liquor is drunk warm, usually at meals, and is not unpleasant nor, I believe, unhealthy. It is as different from the horrible compound sold to the "red-haired sailor" as night from day. The latter has well earned the reputation amongst foreign writers of being maddening.

Wine is used moderately, and the rice-wine is the national drink of the boatmen and the people generally. Only the poets and literary class—any man especially who has any claims to genius—in emulation of ancient poets—are not only permitted, but expected to have great drinking power. "Your toping powers are as great as your genius," is a common compliment paid to a literary celebrity; whereupon he, having disclaimed profusely, proceeds to drink immoderately. As in Dr. Johnson's time, the disgrace lies in being unable to carry your liquor, not in getting inebriated.

The New Year is the great festival of the year, and is amongst the few, and indeed may be said to be the only one, which is marked by cessation from labour by all classes. It is, perhaps, a festival more generally kept than that of any other country. In the evening we

strolled from the boat up the steep bank and across some fields to a small village, composed of a cluster of mud-farmhouses standing on a slight elevation in the little plain, and half encircled by a low range of hills. Here we found evidences everywhere of the New Year festival. The village was cleanly swept, giving to a stranger who might have suddenly been dropped down on it a very delusive idea of Chinese cleanliness. The toil-worn people were not yet in their best attire—for this they do not don until it is actually New Year; many of them, however, had faces flushed with wine; some of them, old and young, were worshipping at their ancestral hall. The village school was shut for the holiday; and everything denoted some great occasion of festivity.

On the lintels of all the doors, from the poorest herdsman's to that of the squire, we noticed the gilt and red papers called tui-lien, on which antithetical sentences suitable to the season are written, and suspended in the hall. One ran thus:—

"The gold flower puts forth its leaves,
The silver tree is full of blossom,"

which, being rudely interpreted, means merely a poetical expression of desire for pecuniary blessing on the household!

Barns, baskets and implements were covered with these papers, inviting a blessing. It was pleasing to see that cleanliness—the doors and woodwork being washed and the roadways beautifully swept—was considered a neces-

VIEW OF THE PAK-SHIK-SHAN.

(*To face p.* 105, Vol. I.)

sary accompaniment of the season. Next one of the better houses we noticed, set in a little plot, a lovely cluster of plum-blossom, indicative of the season in Chinese poetry. Close by the village stood the temple, in which we remarked a tablet to "the Sainted Worthies."

On the bank, on a site commanding a magnificent view of the river, was a bold, precipitous hill looking like a rugged column, called the Pak-shik-shan, or "White-stone Mountain." The sides of this mountain are very steep, and look as if it would give full occupation to those of our countrymen who are prone to fatigue themselves, as our French neighbours say, in this particular way.

Under a magnificent, gnarled old banyan-tree we sat for some time chatting with a group of villagers who had gathered about, while my friend C. W.—who had from his Samaritan services to our boatmen earned the distinction of being called "bone-catcher," or, as we say, doctor—took out his sketch-book and excited not a little curiosity amongst these simple people. One man gave his "1000 pieces of gold," namely his little daughter, into my friend's arms, and we amused them by giving the child the field-glass to look through. C. W. had brought sweetmeats, which greatly pleased them.

On leaving, we had progressed so far in their good graces that, on his pronouncing ch'ing ch'ing, we were greeted by the whole group with ho-kang, "take care of your steps." Then my friend turned round to a

village maiden laughingly,—with a temerity which was hardly safe; for young ladies are not to be lightly addressed in the Flowery Land,—and beckoning her with his hands, said in his most seductive manner, *Loi*, which means "come." Interested as she had hitherto been in the proceedings of the doctor, she was unprepared for this gallant proposal and burst into tears. This little idyll was duly chronicled by the Chinese poet of our party in the following lines:—

"The village joss-house on the hill-top stands,
Beneath two banyans of a hundred years;
'Loi,' said the doctor, waving his learned hands;
'Adieu,' replied the maid, with streaming tears!"

She did not say adieu, but poetic license allows the supposition that she did so.

CHAPTER XIX.

Festive clothing of boat—Gifts—Ill-omens—"Kunghi"—Ha-wan-hü—Tung-chuen—Trade from Pak-hoi—Pak-hoi or Canton as a starting-place—Difficulties before starting—Rice market—Kw'en-lun, the Chinese Olympus—Statistics—"Earth without hair"—Tiresome survey-work—Excellent boat for work—Fortress-like rocks—"The Crooked Turnip"—Kwei-yuen—Danger—Wild-beast show—Destruction of Kwei-yuen—Slow recovery—Buildings on piles—Carts—Ponies.

On returning to the boat, a salvo was given from the heterogeneous collection of firearms on board—and these, repeated by the gunboat close by, and by all the other craft lying near, made the hill-sides echo and re-echo.

Our boat, at the entrance and stern, and all conspicuous places, even the oars, was covered with red strips bearing inscriptions indicative of New Year,—"the New Year brings good luck," and so on, to which we added our humble mite in a "Happy New Year," inscribed over the main entrance, which pleased the boatmen greatly. Our craft had quite a gay look, with its streamers fluttering in the breeze.

We made the hearts of our crew rejoice with the present of a dinner, which we made them. According to Chinese custom it is right for all superiors to give their dependants or employés a gift at this time; shopmen send customers presents; even servants bringing a

message expect a *pourboire.* The Chinese are a great present-giving and present-receiving people, as we were learning to our cost. Nothing can be done without the cumshaw, or present!

An instance of the superstition of the boatmen was exhibited by the captain, when our head interpreter said something to him about hoping that the boat would not suffer in the rapids above. The little man's face became a study of seriousness in a second, and he made a gesture with his hand, as if shaking the very idea away from him and exclaiming, "Absit omen!" It is regarded as peculiarly untimely to refer to any possible misfortune. Next morning, when we made our appearance, we were greeted with "kunghi," "kunghi," "I respectfully wish you joy"—(A Happy New Year!)

On our way we had passed several villages, amongst which were Ha-wan-hü and Tung-chuen, two small towns which form an *entrepôt* of foreign trade between Pak-hoi and Tsun-chau-fu, if foreign trade can be said to exist. The route from Pak-hoi is viâ Wuhlin, which lies close to the waters of a broad creek, whose debouchure is at Pak-hoi. The rest of the journey,—from four to five days,—is over wild hills, which are said to be infested by banditti. The trade which is of the pettiest description, is carried on, by means of coolie transport, by adventurous traders, who travel in armed bands.

Before fixing upon Canton as the initial point of our journey, I had made inquiries about the existence of a route from Pak-hoi; but decided, and wisely I now

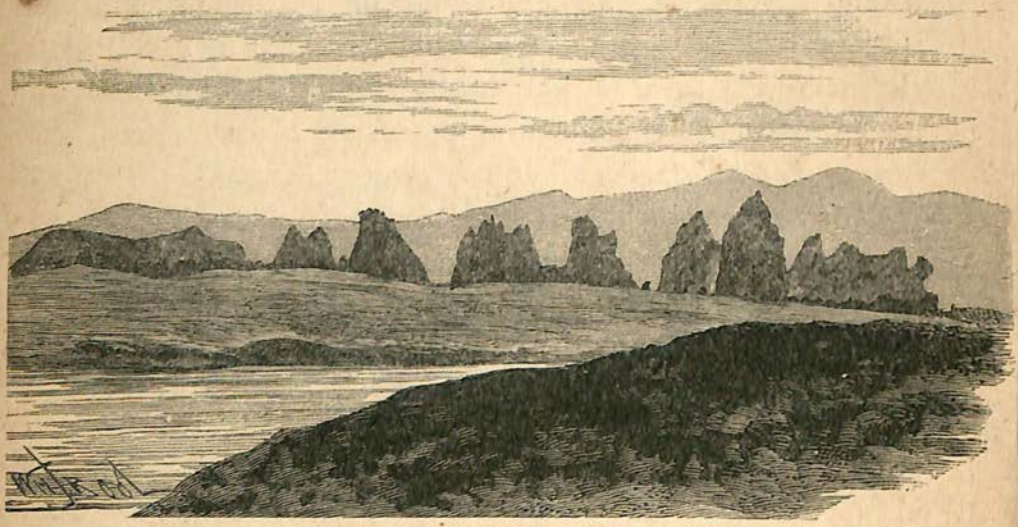
think, on choosing Canton. There had been much of interest to witness, and there might have been difficulties in regard to transport across country and the hire of boats here or higher up.

In the present state of the country, I would strongly counsel any one meditating an inland journey in China to start by boat from some large city, such as Canton or Hankow, where the necessary arrangements can be made. Even with my experience of the delays and obstacles in the way of preparation for travel in India, Burmah and Siam I was totally unprepared for the difficulty which there was in procuring a proper *personnel*, and making the necessary arrangements.

Tung-chuen,—which is some fifty miles above Tsun-chau-fu,—is the principal rice market of Kwang-si, and we noticed a considerable number of junks alongside the banks. It would only be misleading to quote any figures regarding the trade which can be procured. One might as well quote the height, as given by a famous old Chinese philosopher, of Kw'en-lun (the Chinese Olympus, supposed to be the Hindoo Koosh), which he stated as 11,000 li, 114 paces, 2 feet, 6 inches! There is a wealth of detail in these figures, which the Western traveller in China, who is in search of statistics, should bear in mind. Below Tung-chuen there is a three-storied pagoda. The town itself lies in a well-wooded hollow—peeping out through thick foliage, set on the top of the southern bank, which is lined by dark rock of marked strata. It is a picturesque spot, forming an oasis in this wild country whose "earth

is without hair" or, in other words, whose soil is barren.

The river between Tsun-chau and Tung-chuen is a succession of bends, which include in their bearing all points of the compass, and rendered the survey operations, which had to be constantly executed by two of our party, from daybreak until sunset, no easy task. Survey work could be executed admirably from our



NEEDLED LIMESTONE HILLS.

ho-tau, which seemed made for the purpose. It had the advantage of enabling one to mark closely the configuration of the country.

The main feature of the country where we now were consisted in the sharp, peaked rocks, 200 to 500 feet high, which stand isolated on the plain lying on the left bank. A mass of these looking like ruins,—called the Ku-lo-sheak-shan,—and bearing some resemblance to a

castellated fortress, is visible to the westward. These curious piles are met with for the next few miles.

An eight-storied pagoda, called the "Crooked Turnip," though why we could not ascertain, and said to be of great age, was passed, on the south bank, a few miles above Tung-chuen. A three-storied pagoda of newer construction was noticed one li above the first.

Proceeding through a stretch of broken level country, —the banks being in many places lined with rocks, very rugged in outline,—two pagodas (one nine and the other three storied) were passed before reaching Kwei-yuen (Kwei-hien) where we halted for some hours in the afternoon, to enable the boatmen and our cook to replenish their larder.

The captain displayed great anxiety here, insisting on our not showing ourselves, and begging us to be careful to wear our full Chinese costume, so that stray stragglers, who might, as they always do, peep in, should not have any "wild beast show" to report to their friends in the town. He was positive that, if they learned that two foreigners were in the boat, the ho-tau would be stoned; and possibly a little of the good man's anxiety lay in his prudent care for the "Chow-hing."

Kwei-yuen is a walled city, with suburbs reaching beyond, though mostly destroyed; and these, with the remains of a temple and the ruins of many other buildings on the eastern side, which were blown up by the rebels, mark some of the damage done during the Taiping occupation. The city, although from the river presenting a more prosperous look than other places we

had passed, on account of the new wall, and a few respectable structures, facing the river,—remains to this day a fearfully sad spectacle of the destruction which the province underwent and from which, after eighteen years, it has not recovered. The city, from the accounts we heard, and which were confirmed by the extent of the ruins, must formerly have been a place of importance and prosperity. Inside there is one long, wide roadway, well paved, with some good houses and shops, but most are ruined, wretched buildings.

There are branch hongs of Canton firms here, but only a small retail trade. A considerable number of craft lined the bank, which is fringed with rocks,—a portion of the town being built on piles, as usual, outside the walls along the summit of the bank. The city lies in a broken plain, with hills in the rear, which reach the river some 15 miles higher up, close to the Ngan-pai gorge.

The prominent objects visible from the river are the examination hall, an unsightly red building with yellow roof; the new city wall, which looks well; and a flight of stone steps from the water edge to one of the entrances to the city. Carts of a primitive description, on high wheels, are said to be employed. Ponies, of which we saw some two or three dozen along the banks, are used for purposes of agriculture, but there cannot be many in use, judging from the absence of roads.

CHAPTER XX.

Silver-mines close to Ping-tin-tsai—Rise of the Taiping rebellion—"Taiping Wong"—A circus-pony—Kwei-yuen—Ngan-pai gorge—A short cut—Tai-ling-hü—Dangerous rapids—Sacrifice of a fowl—The Ploughshare—Fierce currents—"General Wave-queller"—Temple on a bluff—Magnificent river-view—Absence of beggars—No penny, no pater noster—Cheerful aspect of temple—Bonzes—Worship plus superstition—Buddhism insufficient, a craving for a Pantheon of deities—Confucianism—Worship of deceased ancestors—Politeness—Large bells—Boatmen divining—Mandarin travelling—Vinegar plants.

SILVER-MINES are said to have been discovered and worked by the Taipings, close to a place called Ping-tin-tsai, lying near the range of hills behind the town. The rebels worked these mines by a system of corvée for three years; the labour being paid for by three-fifths of the yield, two-fifths being reserved by the Taipings. Since the collapse of the rebellion, the mines have remained closed, and the local Government refuses permission to reopen them,—a wise measure, so long as the lawless and turbulent spirit of the people remains as it is.

The control of mines in such a region would require a stronger hand than exists at present. Many reforms would have to be effected,—by no means the easy task which Europeans may imagine it to be,—before the opening of a mining industry could, with advantage to the State and the people, be encouraged. I believe the Chinese policy of "government by letting things alone,"

or, as we call it, "masterly inactivity," to be the right one in this respect so long as the present Government exists.

The mark made by the Taiping rebellion in this region, close to its birthplace where it effected such a firm hold, is to be found in the lawless spirit of the people, as well as in the material injury to be witnessed in its ruined cities, villages and temples. The revolt first took rise in the north-east of Kwang-si; but the whole of the province was the heart and soul of the insurrection. The people here say (one of our boatmen had relations killed by the rebels, and narrowly escaped himself) that close by Nan-ning was the locality where Taiping Wong first gained a following, though this, I think, must be incorrect. His pony is said to have been able to lie down and kneel when ordered, and other wonderful stories are told of it; in fact, he has almost developed into a deity.

Above Kwei-yuen the country is a broken level plain with hills converging to the Ngan-pai gorge, and under cultivation with Indian corn, ground-nuts and indigo, with sugar-cane and occasional patches of tobacco. Several villages,—amongst them Nga-tong-hü and Nga-hon-t'ong,—were passed before reaching the Ngan-pai gorge, where the river is suddenly contracted by the approach of low ranges on either side, to about 600 feet. Sixteen miles of river can be shortened by a two-mile cut here!

The river has high banks, with rocky slopes, both above and below the gorge; a range of hills, seemingly

about 1000 feet high, called the Kow-loong-tam-shan, being seen to the south-west, and a few miles distant. Shortly above Heung-kong a range of low, confused hills reaches the river on the south bank, just before joining what resembles a cut or made channel, some 300 ft. broad on the south bank. No one could tell us whether this was a creek or not. Immediately after this a small rocky island showed above the water-level, and here we anchored for the night off a village called Tai-ling-hü.

On the morning of the 21st of February we passed an island soon after our start, and then commenced the ascent of a series of rapids, situated twelve miles above the Ngan-pai gorge—and which are the worst and most dangerous on the river. Before commencing this arduous task, the boatmen anchored, in order to offer up prayers to the spirit, or divinity, presiding over the rapids, and a curious ceremony was gone through. Having brought up near the bank, all the crew assembled, and a small tray was produced and laid with great ceremony on the flush bow of the boat. On this tray were placed six tiny cups of rice-wine in front, and a bunch of joss gilt-papers, with some tea and ginger behind.

The pilot, who acted for the party, knelt down before the tray, made obeisance three times solemnly, and then, turning round, took from the hand of the captain a fine cock, regarding which, I am ashamed to own suspicions in the matter of ownership, our poultry having disappeared very rapidly. He slowly cut its throat, holding it

so that its blood might be shed over the papers and into each cup of wine. A few feathers were then taken out and placed on either side of the bow, and the cups of wine were spilt in different parts of the ho-tau. Then, before taking away the cock, he prostrated himself again three times and went slowly away, followed by the group of boatmen. The ceremony was over, and, being anxious to know the fate of the fowl, I satisfied myself that he went straight into the hands of the young lad who acted as their cook.

Amongst these rapids the Lai-pik-tan or "Ploughshare" is justly named, and distinguished as the worst. The channel lies close to the northern bank, with rocks forming a network, through which it is a difficult task to make way against the currents which, foaming and lashing, tear at a terrible pace round the rocks. We were forty minutes in getting over this rapid, a distance of a few yards. We were constantly driven back with violence against the rocks, although we had, for most of the time, two, and at one time, three, lines out fastened to rocks. Luckily, owing to the fender-boom carried on either side, no damage was done.

After the exertions of passing this rapid we called a halt, in order to allow the men time to land at the Fu-po-cheang-kwan-mieu (lit. "General Wave-queller" temple), a temple where all ascending or descending boats make it a practice to stop. Here our boatmen made offerings at the temple, by way of thanks to the water-spirit for the assistance rendered in overcoming the last rapid, and prayed for further aid. The temple

is a fine structure, mostly of modern construction, with a grand flight of massive steps and a granite platform and columns supporting the outer and inner gateways. It stands, as is usual in China where the people have a keen eye for the picturesque in the matter of their religious shrines, in a most romantic situation,

TEMPLE ON CANTON RIVER.

being placed on a rocky bluff, commanding a magnificent view of the river.

We stood on the stone-paved portico facing the temple and looked upon a wondrous scene, the centre of the landscape formed of the labyrinth of rocks, the stream, gleaming in the noon-day sun, lashing past the jagged obstructions in its way, as if it would sweep the huge masses out of its path. The swirling eddies and tearing current showed here and there traces of their

force in water-worn timbers lodged in crevices of the rocks, and remnants of craft which had been broken up in their passage through these fierce rapids.

Lower down several boats were staggering up, and quivering in every timber, every man of the crews shouting and yelling fiercely to aid their efforts,—their tow-lines out,—and creeping along, inch by inch, as we had done. It was a grand picture. It is not surprising that these simple and ignorant people have chosen this romantic spot for the erection of a temple to the spirit of the waters.

The temple has the advantage of being kept beautifully clean and, still better, of being free from that crowd of vagrants, beggars and hucksters who infest the portico in front of such sacred edifices in the cities. It was covered with inscriptions, both antithetical scrolls and ornamental tablets, the gifts of some grateful votary or wayfarer. Most of these had reference to the supposed attributes of "General Wave-queller." Many of the inscriptions had been given by people of distinction or position. The presentation of them is not only considered a most meritorious act, but it is the fashion! Those given by people of influence are placed in prominent positions; but I understood that some money gift,—so inseparable from any action in China, even in religious matters,—proportionate to the giver's position, was a *sine quâ non.*

The granite slabs, the cleanly look, the absence of any ragged crowd and the bright inscriptions gave an air of brightness to the temple, which was absent in those we

A BUDDHIST ABBOT. (*To face p.* 119, Vol. I.)

had seen in Canton where they were gloomy, cheerless structures.

When we entered, the Bonzes, or priests, some four in number, came forward to receive us. They were not dressed in yellow canonicals, as the Buddhist priesthood are in Indo-China. Apparently they only assume their religious garb when daily prayers are chanted. At first it strikes one as strange that the worship of national or local deities, such as we here witnessed, should be allowed by the Buddhist priests; but one soon learns that in China the Buddhists have no scruples in allowing such deities to be worshipped. In fact they welcome all who will bring devotees to the shrine. The Buddhists in China have allowed numberless superstitions, which have ever found a fertile soil in that land, to be grafted on the dogmas of Fo and have taken innumerable deities into their mythology.

In this curious and ridiculous mixture of Buddhism and superstitious worship of deities the poor and suffering people find a comfort, and have satisfied a craving which the pure doctrines of Buddha seems not to have satiated. The doctrines of Confucius are not for the poor. They concern the learned classes alone, who profess them, making no pretence whatever of finding religious views therein, but merely a system of positive philosophy and practical morals. Confucianism has remained alone of the three great religions of China free from any introduction of mythology or superstition. If its instructions be imperfect and unsatisfactory, as they are, what can be said of the Buddhist worship as practised

in China, the creed and symbols of which the very priesthood,—an abject and ignorant race,—are unable to explain? The tenets of Lautz, the founder of the Rationalist school, may be said to provide the marvellous and subtle part of the popular creed. The *real* religion of the Chinese may be said to be the worship of deceased ancestors.

The bonzes were politeness itself and showed us over the whole temple. In the centre of the main hall, stood the shrine of the General's spirit (or spirit of the deity), and at the back we observed a large bell, some four feet in height and of the pattern usual in China, covered with prayers and inscriptions of a religious character. These bells have no tongue, and are struck with a wooden mallet. There are a few large bells cast in China, notably the one in Pekin, which is said to be over twelve cubits high and one cubit thick.

The bonzes accompanying us pointed out an old tripod of metal, inscribed and used for receiving the ashes of papers burnt in worship. The Chinese have lost the art of casting both bells and tripods, as large and as fine in workmanship as formerly.

This is a favourite temple with the boatmen, who in it divine as to the success of their prayers, or the fortune which they are to have on their journey; this is done by casting lots, or rather by throwing slips of wood. We were standing by when our boatmen went through the ceremony. The crew of the ho-tau of the mandarin, whom we had passed, were there for a similar purpose, as well as the usual official retinue of servants

and hangers-on. Candles were flickering and incense burning before the shrine, casting a dim light in the spacious hall, while the motley group of bonzes, boatmen, servants in uniform, and others who were assembled, imparted a picturesque air to the scene.

One of the boatmen took a case, in which were some thirty long and slender slips of wood all numbered, and, kneeling before the shrine on a mat, holding his hands reverentially before him, he bowed three times and shook the case with a slow motion until one gently fell out. This was given to the priest, who gave the answer, which is numbered to correspond with the slip drawn, and written in verse on a piece of ordinary paper. They had entered the cave, and heard the Sibyl's voice!

The boatmen's faces, after perusal of the paper, were bright with hope—a touching study. At my request the paper was afterwards given to me and translated. It runs thus:—

"The sun in the river, reflected from the sky, you need not seek;
There is no light without shade that the stranger from the East reveres;
A man of old, now a minister in heaven, do you know him or not?
The steps of your shoes are upon peace and security, as your sacrifice has been made to (the spirit of) the vast flowing (stream)."

The poor boatmen had no doubt seized upon the words "peace" and "security" to make the omen favourable. It was unintelligible to us.

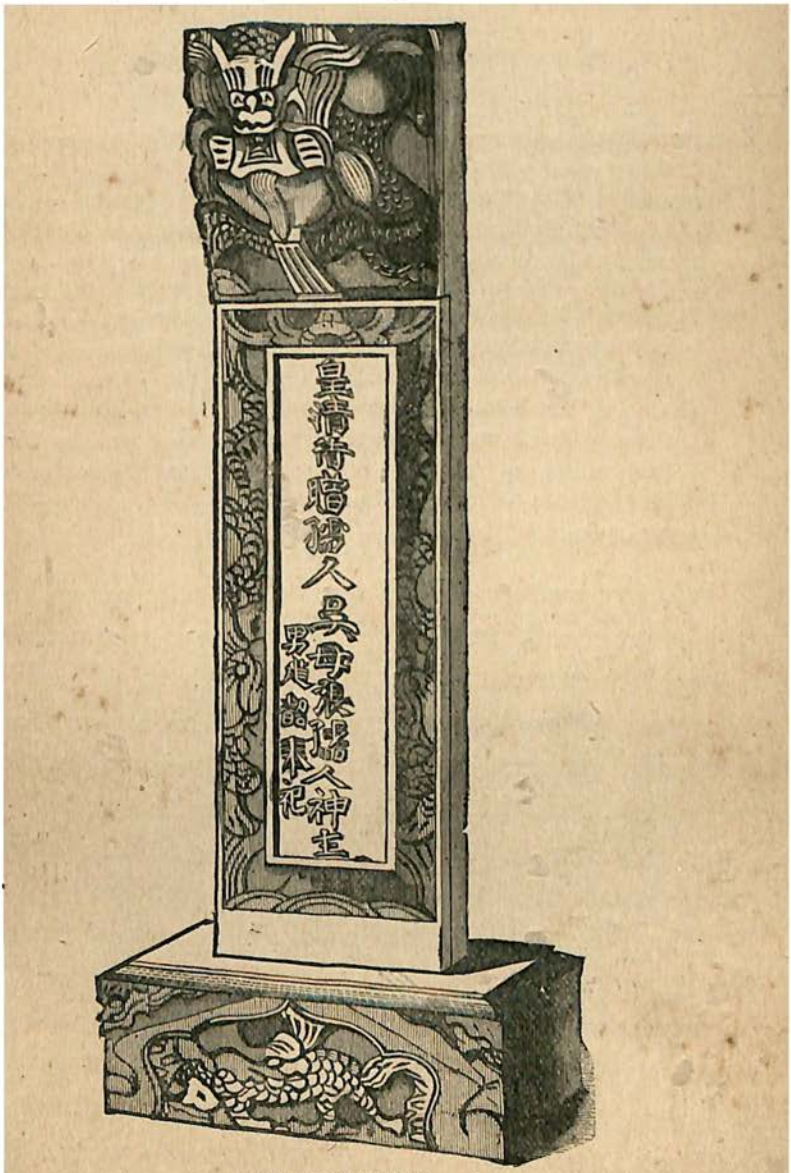
Other methods of divination are common, one by means of bamboo slips bearing certain characters which

are deciphered after the same fashion; another method is to cover a tray with fine sand, over which is suspended a wooden pointed pen which, influenced by the particular divinity invoked, and held in the hand of the suppliant, traces some obscure words. These the diviners translate with an air of extreme sapiency.

In making our struggling way through the rapids, we passed three ho-taus belonging to a mandarin who was going as Prefect to a district in Kwei-chau, some eight days' distance by land from Pe-sê, our own destination. We wished to make his acquaintance, and intended to send our cards, thinking that we might have him as a fellow-traveller to Pe-sê; but at the temple we learnt that he expected to take ten days longer than ourselves; and as we made only a short halt at the temple, we had no opportunity of making his acquaintance. He was travelling *en grande tenue*, with policemen and servants. His flags were flying, and in front we noticed the official chair with its accessories.

In one of the boats were being conveyed his feminine belongings, and as we passed we noticed a pair of heads looking through one of the tiny windows, with eyes intent on seeing something of the foreign barbarians. On being noticed, their heads were swiftly withdrawn. The little peep we had was quite sufficient, for the faces we saw certainly did not belong to the category of "fatal beauties." More sour-visaged old creatures I had not seen for some time. If not beautiful, they were at any rate not neglected by their lord and master in the scandalous manner indicated in a Chinese proverb, where

The hero-husband in flitting took care to remove all his goods and chattels, not forgetting the old umbrella and pipe. Only one thing was forgotten—*his wife!*



ANCESTRAL TABLET.

CHAPTER XXI.

Danger of navigation — Additional pilots and helmsmen — Chinese itinerary — Pig's-head hill — Ping-fat—Peaked rocks on plain — Renowned rock, the Emperor's refuge — Cards and presents — Hwang-chau — Temples and Canton Guild-house — Temple of Confucius — Decay from former grandeur — The "36-li" rapid — Nam-heong-hü —Through trade with Pak-hoi—Wheelbarrow traffic—Cultivation—Ping-tong—Heavy dues a barrier to trade—Banditti—Stones and ruined temples near Cha-sun-tai—Fo-yin-kok—Wide reach of river—Sap-ye-lo-shan—Village on bluff—A Taiping fort—Terraced bank—Conjuring good-fortune away — Sun-on-hu — Sam-chow rapids — Defence of Ko-cheun — Wing-sung-yuen, not destroyed by Taipings — Importance of former carrying trade from Yünnan — Seven-storied pagoda—Town wall on precipice—Wild scenery—Ruined watch-tower.

THE more we saw of this river the more apparent did the danger of the descending passage become. The intricately tortuous passages through the rapids, a labyrinth of rocks, with the swirling eddies and lashing currents, present difficulties which seem almost insuperable, but which are overcome by the skilful boatmen. Additional pilots and helmsmen are taken,—sometimes six being required for steering.

The pilot we had on board, who came from Wu-chau, had been many years on the river, and gave us some, though not much, information regarding the navigation and the river generally. He told us that a Chinese itinerary, giving the names of all the towns and villages, as well as those of the rapids,—which I had

tried to get at Canton, and afterwards at Wu-chau,—is not to be bought and can only be procured with difficulty. He promised to try to get a copy of his own from a brother resident in Nan-ning; but as we were meanwhile compelled to amass the very information contained in it for our survey, it could not then be of much value. Besides, their promises were of the nature of pie-crust!

A few miles above the last rapid a bold, rocky bluff rises from the river, regarding which a curious legend attaches. It seems that the hill was at one time called Tchü-tan, or Pig's Head; but some fishermen, having discovered the image of a Buddhist goddess near it, were instructed by her to place it on the hill, whose name was changed to Ne-to, and a temple was erected to the goddess on a peak opposite, close to a village called Ping-fat. The same species of peaked rocks, or pinnacles, is met with a little higher up, strewn over the plain next the river, similar to those before mentioned near Kwei-yuen.

After this we passed a renowned rock, rising abruptly from the right bank of the river, called Pang-tong-ngan. Here the famous Emperor of the Ming dynasty, Kin-mun, is said to have taken refuge with 2000 followers, and afterwards to have become a priest in a cave-temple close by. Judging by the apparent size of the cave, allowance must be made for Chinese exaggeration.

Although having an escort, in the shape of a gunboat, and sometimes a police-boat also between very bad places, gave one a feeling of security on this river of bad

repute, there was an unpleasant side to the medal! Each time a change of boats was made, or nearly every six hours, a visit was made by the gunboat men with a card from the commander, in return for which our cards and a present were sent, without which ceremony leave was never taken.

I suppose our cards represented to the several commanders proofs that they had safely delivered us into other hands. This daily present-giving was a serious tax upon the purse but the custom is inevitable. Having brought out a considerable number of presents, we tried them with knives and other articles, but money was evidently more acceptable. On one occasion, when we gave nothing to a boat that had come only a few miles, we heard, as the man turned away, smothered words of a more forcible than complimentary character! They come to worship the god "Cumshaw" (present), and we could not, like the fortune-tellers, put them off with some equivocal Delphian distich. Even if it were possible to see in this a symbolism or "survival" of some ancient rite, its beauty is lost when one has to pay so much.

Passing through sharp bends of the river and several villages of no importance, prettily situated amongst clumps of bamboo and thick clusters of trees, then through a plain of broken, undulating ground,—rice and Indian corn being under close cultivation,—we came to the city of Hwang-chau. It lies on a sharp bend of the river, here about 400 yards in width. To the north lies a range of mountains, seemingly about

2000 feet high, on the ridge of which some temples are situated; while on the south side a low range of confused hills close in on the river; these are joined, two miles further up-stream, by a similar range on the north side, which continues for some time.

As the traveller approaches the city, the first things that strike the eye are the remains of some ruined temples, and next them those of the Kwang-tung or Canton Guild-house destroyed by the Taipings. These are admirably situated, facing the river, and enjoy, as these structures often do, the pleasant shade of magnificent trees. They were well built of solid granite blocks but remain now, after close on twenty years, unroofed and in the ruined condition in which they were left by the rebels. The fine stone steps leading from the water's edge to the temples, the broken columns, the carved stone-work and the area which they cover show that they were once justly celebrated.

At the upper end of the town, a temple of Confucius, in glaring red colour, attracts the eye from its unsightliness. The business suburb of the city, which lies facing the river, is built on a stone-faced wall protective against the floods, the stone steps of which are in bad order. The whole town presents in fact a poor and decayed appearance, and although it contains a number of petty shops, there are no hongs now of any importance. Hwang-chau is reputed to have been a city of great commercial prosperity before the Taiping occupation; the up-town stone embankment, ruined guild-house, temples and other structures are all monuments

which attest the truth of its reputed former grandeur. The country above Hwang-chau is hilly, consisting of low ranges, clad with small trees lining the river, which here widens greatly. Two islands were passed thickly wooded, and close to them the navigation was very difficult, on account of the maze of rocks and powerful rapids, which here end with what is called "the 36 li long rapid." Soon after this we anchored at the village of Nam-heong-hu opposite to which, on a bold, rocky site, stands the ruins of a joss-house, blown up by the rebels.

We were now in the midst of beautiful scenery, and had the advantage of the sun, which we had not seen for several days. The purple tints on the richly wooded hills in the distance; the brown, moor-like colour of the confusion of hills close to the water-edge; the rapids and gleaming river rushing past; all these made up pictures which were ever-changing.

A small trade exists between Nan-ning as well as other towns up the river and Pak-hoi, through this place (Nam-heong-hü). The journey is said to take five to six days; the greater portion of the trade goes by small creeks part of the journey, between Lien-chau-fu and Ling-shan, one day by wheel-barrow,—so it may be imagined what the trade of the place is! Goods are taxed at Lien-chau and Nam-heong.

For half-a-dozen miles beyond the "*36 li* long rapid" the country regains an open character, and is planted with rice, Indian corn and sugar-cane; but a few miles below the village of Ping-tong low hilly country

recommences, and continues for nearly twenty miles, to a small village named Sun-on-hü. A small trade of the pettiest description exists at Ping-tong, similar to that described at Nam-heong. A coarse kind of salt is sold, which comes from the Kwang-tung province, and probably from the neighbourhood of Pak-hoi (a treaty port on the Tonquin Gulf).

The transport is effected, we were told, as follows: to Ling-shan 60 li (one day), by the creek which debouches at Ping-tong; to Hung-chau (which we failed to find on any maps we had with us) probably on the stream debouching close to Pak-hoi (by road three days), thence to Pak-hoi, five days by creek. Thus the journey takes nine days; then there is the cost of trans-shipment. The heavy dues at present exacted, however, form a barrier effectual enough against trade from Pak-hoi.

Judging from the map and from such native reports as we can place any reliance upon this route could be much improved, and Pak-hoi is admirably situated as a central depôt of distribution to the provinces of Kwang-tung and Kwang-si, *viâ* this river.

The country between the West river and the streams which go to Pak-hoi is reported to be hilly. The main backbone, or range, would have to be crossed and this hilly portion is said to be harassed by robbers or banditti, and in such a lawless state that the traders who venture across only go in armed parties. Trade under such circumstances of course is an impossibility. An examination of the country by some competent observer would be of benefit.

Shortly before arriving at Ping-tong, we saw a ruined group of buildings, probably the remains of a cluster of temples, and near them were two large round upright stones lying near a hamlet, Cha-sun-tai. Passing several villages of small size, and some rapids of no note, the prettily situated village of Fo-yin-kok was reached, at a sharp bend in the river. The noble stream here widens out to close on three-quarters of a mile. Immediately after, and on the other side, the village of Sap-ye-lo shan (twelve red umbrella village) stands, partly over a bluff and partly in the face of a hill.

At the back the situation was very fine. The bold buttress, which the bluff presents to the river, makes not only a picturesquely wild but effective site for a fort, for which purpose it was used by the Taipings, who here levied "black-mail" on the fugitive trade which was not destroyed by them. On the eastern side of the bluff the banks are built up in irregular terraces of rough rubble stone-work, with good stone steps from the water-edge to the bank, where some noble trees give a welcome shade to the villagers.

A photograph was taken of the beautiful spot; it was hastily done, as some fishermen were not far off muttering together. The dry-plate photographic apparatus, which we had, seemed to answer very well; but owing to the suspicions of the people that we were going to conjure away their "Po" (good fortune) we had not yet been able to use it much. Our boatmen even would not allow themselves to be taken. On the other side some very steep rocks were passed, and immediately

after the village of Sun-on-hü, where we halted for the night.

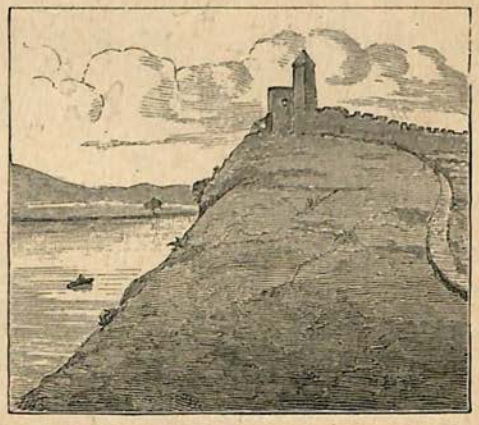
The river banks, after leaving Sun-on-hü, are high; and the country abounding in hillocks, is bare and barren-looking. The Sam-chow rapids were encountered a few miles further on, near the village of the same name, lying opposite a red sandstone bluff. A large village named Ko-cheun, better built than any we had seen, was noticed on the south bank; and soon after the town of Wing-sung-yuen (Yung-shun-hien), on the same side of the river. Ko-cheun is remarkable as having made a sturdy defence against the Taipings, never having been taken by the rebels, whilst the prefectural city near by opened her gates without a blow.

Wing-sung-yuen is one of the few places, and the only city along this river, which has not suffered sorely by the Taiping rebellion. Its buildings are untouched, the town having been evacuated unharmed by the rebels; yet it has a complete air of decay; and ruin is written on its face, although a part of it has been rebuilt, and it has been adorned with a cluster of brand-new joss-houses, which give an air of gaiety to the lower suburb. A red Confucian temple was conspicuous from the river. It would thus appear that the degraded and ruined state of the cities and towns along the river is not alone owing to the Taiping rebellion, but is also probably partly due to the diversion of the large carrying trade which formerly existed between Yünnan and Canton to the Yang-tze. The natural water-carriage to Eastern

Yünnan is no doubt the West river, which is not only much shorter in itself but involves a quicker land journey to its head-waters.

With little cultivable ground, and little commerce, the cities on this river were chiefly maintained by the carrying trade, and to support this few Cantonese traders, of the many who were once settled in each town, have returned. They say the trade has gone, but they fail to see any reason or will give none; enough that it has gone. Just below the city we saw a seven-storied pagoda, which was partly demolished by the rebels and rebuilt in 1880. It is a handsome structure, built of grey stone or brick.

After passing the main part of the city, the fine old wall was observed standing picturesquely over a precipice



CITY WALL, WING-SUNG-YUEN.

overhanging the river. In its north-west corner there was a hexagonal building, which we took for a pagoda, but which we were told was a watch-tower. The wall

looked effective, covered with creepers and bushes, and like some feudal stronghold.

Passing several hamlets, about eight miles further on, we entered a very wild bare country with hills about 2000 feet high, on the north bank, close by. The river here has banks of masses of jagged, fierce rocks, standing like rugged stone harrows out of the water; and takes a sharp turn southwards, leaving what looks like its old stone bed at the foot of the high range mentioned before. The scenery is very wild and looks more suitable for a robber haunt than anything we had yet seen. At the extreme inner point of the bend we noticed a high ruined watch-tower, built of stones.

CHAPTER XXII.

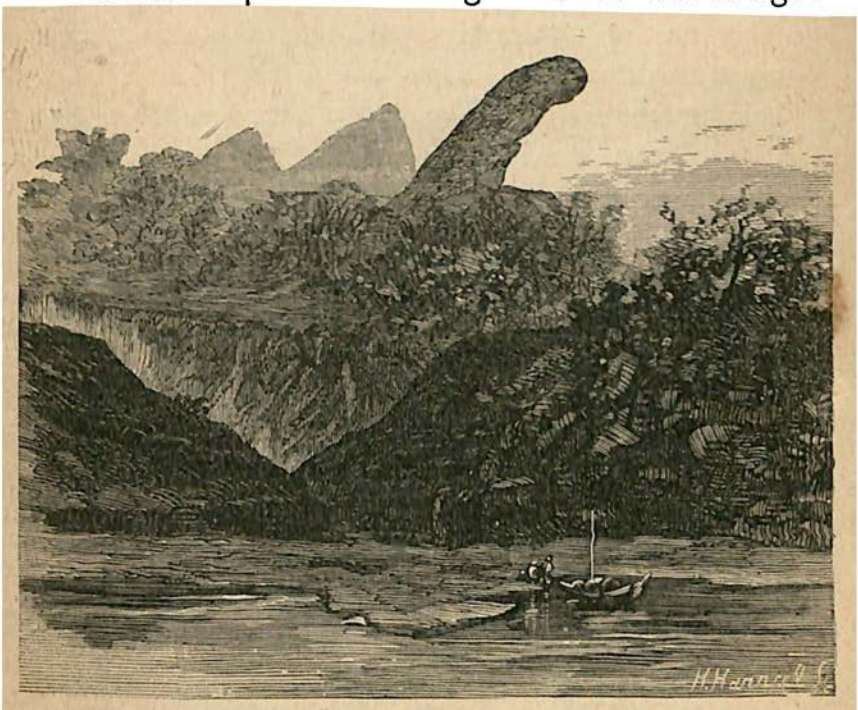
Ling-le-tong—Tsam-pan-hü—Figure of the Detained Husband—Pat-tai-ngan—Po-mieu-hü—Joss-house on bluff—Pak-chik-kong—Fan-tan rapid—River at its lowest—Arduous work for boatmen—Tedious survey-work—Good-natured boatmen—Supplies—A turtle for five-pence—Ingenious bill-making—Strange coinage—Affected indifference—Boat-hongs in Canton—Wages of crew—Captain's arrangements—The Wealth god—Men feeding—Cold water never drunk by the Chinese—Physique of men—Obesity of sedentary Chinese—The five blessings—Practical jokes—Chim-to—An octagonal pagoda opposite Kong-nga-hü—A fine prospect—Buddhist monastery—Retirement for the over-fed—Open country—Nan-ning, a walled, prefectural town, not so important as Wu-chau—Small trade—Taiping and Mahomedan rebellions diverted the trade to the Yang-tze—Admirable position of town—Decadence—Description of the Province of Kwang-si.

FOR the next twenty miles the country regains its open character, the banks being high, and we passed two or three villages and sand-banks. The villages were prettily situated, hedged in by clumps of bamboo, and groups of fine trees. The scenes on the river were beautiful, and, after the wild country we had just left, were pleasant to the eye.

Ling-le-tong is the most important of the petty villages we saw to-day. We anchored a few miles above Tsam-pan-hü, nearly opposite to which is the figure of the "Detained Husband," standing boldly out on a rock, with a small cave underneath, overhanging the river. The figure resembles in outline that of the

"Neglected Wife," passed by us in the grand Shau-hing gorge. The boatmen firmly believe the legend, to which I have previously alluded.

We sailed past two villages named Pat-tai-ngan



THE DETAINED HUSBAND.

and Po-mieu-hü, remarkable for the beauty of their position, set as they are in groups of fine trees, and bamboos, at the base of low hills, which here touch the river on the south side. The stream now rushed between high rocky banks, and the country became broken and uneven.

Just before the first-mentioned village a joss-house stands in a most picturesquely-chosen spot, built into

the crest of a precipitous bluff, so sheer that a portion of the bluff having given way, the front of the structure seems to overhang the river. The background of fir, the romantic situation and the river waters flowing quickly past in the cool clear light of early morning, reminded us strongly of Swiss lake scenery.

Passing the Pak-chik-kong,—a large creek running southwards for some distance,—the Fan-tan rapid was reached, where a reef of rocks, looking like stepping-stones, runs across the river. At this season, the lowest water-level of the year, there was only a channel of some hundred feet on the south side. These rapids are very strong; we took three-quarters of an hour, with every hand hard at work, to progress a few yards and overcome them.

The tracking throughout the day was of more than usually arduous character, the ground along the banks being broken and difficult. The men, on a day such as this when the wind fails, have to track from soon after daybreak until seven in the evening,—often with only an hour and a half rest in the day for meals. They bear this lengthened toil bravely.

The survey work,—which my friend Charles Wahab and I took day about,—we found very trying for so many hours. The exposure to the sun, and having to keep one's attention constantly riveted on the features of the river, for nearly twelve hours a day, is more wearying than may be imagined. We first tried four reliefs of three hours in the day, but found that it interfered with the mapping of the survey and other work; so we finally

arranged to take day about which (excepting the fatigue) answered admirably. Our *modus operandi* was to survey one day and lay down (or plot) the next. This left us the evenings free for writing up the diary, and other employments. We likewise kept up a meteorological register and aneroid readings, for taking a section of our route,—a process which we continued throughout our journey. These duties left no leisure time. I am sure we looked forward to the chow (meal) time of the men, as eagerly as they did themselves. Our food we had to bolt as best we could.

The boatmen gave us no reason to alter the good opinion which we, early on our journey, formed of them. Their quiet *bonhomie*, hard work, sobriety and readiness to assist each other, or ourselves, at any and all times was beyond praise. This was very different from what we had been led to expect of them. We never once had occasion to find fault with them. They never left the boat, except for a few minutes, to make the necessary purchases for their larder.

We ourselves found it advisable to renew our stock of poultry, country vegetables, and other supplies, at the larger towns, as the people are not always willing to sell at the smaller, and time is lost thereby; while fish could generally be had, though of rather a tasteless description the higher we got up the river. In this part of the river we purchased a fine turtle for 100 cash, equal to about fivepence; and indulged the next day (in the depths of Southern China) in the soup which delights the aldermanic heart, and tried to imagine ourselves at *Pim's*.

Our cook still maintained his former reputation for ingenious bill-making, and we were compelled to look carefully into the accounts, with all the worrying difficulty of using a strange coinage. Our ducks disappeared with a fatal facility; but on the initial part of our journey and before the marching commenced, it would have been imprudent to inquire too closely into the fate of all our numerous web-footed purchases. We were compelled to affect an indifference in these matters which we, with a limited sum of silver, and no means of recruiting finances till we reached Zimmé (Kiang-mai), were very far from feeling.

Nearly all our crew, as I found from the talks which we had with them, were from the same neighbourhood, near Shau-hing, and were acquaintances of our good captain, by whom they were chosen from the boat-hiring establishment or hong in Canton.

These clubs are similar to those which are in existence for hiring coolies for porterage, or for sedan-chairs. The head of the club is responsible for the men, and receives for his trouble a certain small fee. Usually the men are selected haphazard by the hong headman; but in our case, no doubt managed by a small "squeeze," the captain got a picked crew of men, whom he knew to be steady hands and not confirmed opium-smokers. This headman went security for the captain in the transaction, when two-thirds advance was given to him before starting. The system seems to work admirably, and is a great convenience. The boatmen (of whom there were twelve) received each eight dollars for

the trip to Pe-sê and back (with their food found); no matter how long the captain might be compelled to remain there for a return freight.

The leading tracker received three dollars extra; the fore-helmsman three; and the captain saved the same sum by steering himself, which duty, if he handed over to one of the crew, he would have had to pay extra for. The pilot from Wu-chau received four dollars, and the little cook-boy two dollars a month, and his food; he is a fixture in the boat.

The usual freight is, either a mandarin coming from, or going to, Yünnan, or Kwang-si, or a number of passengers; the latter paying the best. The captain sometimes has to wait one and, at times, two months at Pe-sê, feeding all his men, until he can obtain a return freight; and occasionally makes a good haul, but sometimes loses by the journey.

The business is rather a venturesome one, and involves a considerable amount of sacrifices, and offerings to the "Wealth god," who is said, by competent authority, to be greatly venerated in China; even more so than Confucius, "because he possesses the power of enriching those whom he likes." To this god is offered in the way of sacrifice hens, eggs, game, fireworks, and carp, which, for this occasion, is called "silver-ingot fish."

One morning, while sitting on the deck roof, I watched the men at their chow, unseen by them, for, curious as they are, and wanting altogether in bashfulness, they do not like to be stared at themselves. They

were gathered in two little groups round two wooden trays, of rough workmanship, measuring about thirty inches by fifteen inches, on which were placed four small bowls, filled with vegetables (coarse beans and roots, which I could not recognise), and near the tray there was a huge bowl of beautifully cooked rice. Each man had a small bowl of rice before him held in his left hand, while with his right, he worked the "nimble lads," as "chopsticks" are called, with most wonderful dexterity. Bowls of hot water were drunk from at intervals, proving that these poor men cannot afford at each meal their dish of tea, which every Chinaman, who can afford it, always has at hand.

Cold water is never drunk by the Chinese, as they consider it unhealthy in the extreme and uncivilised, only fit for barbarians. No doubt this curious custom of only hot beverages being in vogue (which I have often heard wondered at), comes from the impure and polluted water supply (river water) in the large cities. The custom, therefore,—if that be the explanation,—is founded on common sense and not on a perverted way of looking at things,—so invariably attributed to Chinamen by Europeans.

The physique of the boatmen, although light, was decidedly good; they were wiry, and well-chested; their arms (though small) were like whip-cord; and the muscles of their legs stood out well developed; they formed a striking contrast to the obesity of the ordinary, well-to-do Chinaman. The corpulence of the well-to-do Chinaman is something alarming and far from pleasant

for the eye to rest upon. To them, however, it means that, "Heaven hath sent them fortune," and on that score alone, if not absolutely for its own sake, would doubtless be held in regard. A full face signifies prosperity and it is a matter for wonderment that among the "five blessings" so desired by all Chinamen (usually understood to be longevity, riches, honour, prosperity or tranquillity and a natural death), obesity does not find a prominent place!

The feet of our boatmen were small and very flat, with hardly any instep; and their hands, considering the labour which they undergo, surprisingly wanting in signs of strength, and in hardness; in this respect they were unlike the "horny-handed sons of toil" at home, or indeed even their two foreign passengers. They were childish in their amusements, being quite illiterate; and when not working or smoking, they amused themselves at some innocent, but harmless, pranks, or with practical jokes.

A favourite one was placing a feather or straw in the felt hat of some comrade, whose back happened to be turned;—each playing this joke, a game of fool, upon his neighbour. All being on the alert, peals of laughter were heard when some man, thinking himself secure, found that he was the object of ridicule. It never failed to amuse. On the twenty-fourth day of our boat journey I found them playing it for the twenty-fourth time, with a freshness of glee which made the civilised western traveller sigh with envy!

Immediately above the Fan-tan rapid the village of

Chim-to lies on a sharp bend of the river (which here turns south). Shortly after this an octagonal pagoda, in seven tiers or stories, was seen some distance ahead, situated on a high peak of mountains lying to the north. Ascending the river past two sandy islands with no cultivation, opposite the village of Kong-nga-hü which is on the south bank, we came to a seven-storied pagoda. It is on a magnificent site commanding, we were told and could readily believe, a fine view.

Close by there is a handsome Buddhist monastery, richly decorated, resting in a fine position and nestling amongst beautiful foliage, on a precipitous side of the hill. To this edifice is attached a low building, seemingly well built, which contains a suite of rooms such as are generally found in connection with these monastic establishments, and whither affluent Chinese gentlemen, who feel that fortune hath been too kind to them, wend their way to reside and do penance for a time on vegetable diet. This would have been rather a pleasant change, than otherwise, from the ordinary cookery for us. Animal life is not allowed by Buddhist law to be taken; but in this, as in other matters, the rigidity of the law is relaxed in favour of western reverend gentlemen, who occasionally take their abode in these sanitaria.

Just above the pagoda, a footpath runs across, by a short cut, to Nan-ning-fu, some three miles it is said, while the river winding greatly takes one a distance of over ten. The character of the country was now completely altered, being more open, and the hills sinking

into the plain close by Nan-ning. The verdant banks were sloping, beautifully wooded, and the district alto-

A CHINESE GENTLEMAN.

gether had a cultivated and civilised air, especially after the wild and bare country through which we had been passing. Nan-ning, which is about a mile in length,

stretches along the concave northern side of a bend in the river. We anchored opposite to the On-sat gate, near which were stationed the Lekim and Custom guard and gunboats, of which there were several.

Nan-ning is a walled prefectural town, with a reported population of from 30 to 40,000, which latter figure is probably not over-estimated. There is a small distributary trade from Canton and Pak-hoi, but from the little we could learn and see without landing to enable us to form a judgment, it is by no means so important a commercial centre as Wu-chau.

Situated as it is on a small level plain,—small, that is, relatively to the area of hilly regions,—and surrounded by hilly country, with few natural resources at its back; with no manufacture, except a small one of brass-work; not being in open, safe, and easy communication with any port—Canton and Pak-hoi being at present nearly equally out of the question for various reasons, and lastly with the former carrying trade from Yünnan diverted to the Yang-tze—it is no difficult task, for the least observant of travellers, to explain the reason of its present want of consequence.

Nan-ning occupies much the same relative position as Wu-chau on the West river, that is they are both, as may be seen on the map, placed near the junction of big streams, which might serve as distributaries, if there were any trade to be done. The country is, however, a barren one, the people are poverty-stricken and the waterways insecure. Before the disastrous effects of the Yünnan Mussulman rebellion and of the Taiping

occupation had destroyed the carrying-trade of this river, driving it to the Yang-tze, Nan-ning is reported to have been in a much more prosperous state and to have shown signs of real commercial activity; whilst now the city has the same want of bustle, the unmistakable air of crumbling decay which we had witnessed in so many other places along this river. The position of Nan-ning is an admirable one, as the river branches above the town. One arm to the south-west brings the south-western part of Kwang-si and the Tonquin border into communication; the other branch (the one on which we travelled) reaches Yünnan through the intervening country, and is *the* highway in the south from eastern Yünnan.

Its position being so good, now that order has been restored in Yünnan, and comparative order in the south and south-west, and the Tonquin side, it might be expected partially at least to rise to its former commercial consequence. But what I believe to have been the sole cause of its former prosperity—the carrying-trade—has fled. The country close by has by no means lost its character for lawlessness; the river itself (though with its cordon of gunboats) is not safe; the communications (either with Canton or Pak-hoi) are very defective and expensive, from causes previously indicated; and lastly, there is at present little or no trade to be done.

To arm-chair projectors who, studying some imperfect map of China at home, may fancy that alongside this waterway of the West river there must exist a

teeming population, living on enormous cultivated plains on its banks, it is the duty of the truth-seeking and truth-telling traveller to dispel the illusion. The province of Kwang-si, compared with other provinces of China, is mountainous, bare and barren, thinly peopled and with only a small area which is cultivable,—this being where the river banks here and there spread out into small plains; and these become fewer as one travels westwards.

Surprisingly small as the amount of cultivable land is in this huge province, which (like Kwang-tung, the neighbouring province) is of about the area, roughly speaking, of Great Britain, the thinness of the population is all the more remarkable. All the land which is culturable is by no means under cultivation—as is the general impression in regard to China—and this shows the paucity of population relatively to the enormous area of the province.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Silver, quicksilver and other mines—A land of floating words—Lead, copper, iron, mercury and opium from Yünnan—Danger of journey —Trade and manufactures of Nan-ning—Gold-leaf made of brass — Prevented from landing — Turbulence of the populace — Attack on Roman Catholic missionaries — Reasons for not landing — Precautions of the Prefect. — Posting my journal — Payment on delivery — Appearance of village on opposite shore—Gamblers — The proclamation—Loss of "Po"—So much for Buckingham— Anxiety of the Prefect — Mandarins and their attachés — Squeezes —Small salaries — Honesty of officials — Handsome dogs — Cost of mandarin dress— Red, the official colour — Decoration of mandarin boat—Flowers and thrush—Smuggling opium—The black smoke— Smuggling under the Ægis of mandarins.

THERE are reported to be mines (if they deserve that name) in different parts of Kwang-si; silver, quicksilver and other metals, which are all under the superintendence of the Government. But, like the silver mine which I mentioned as existing formerly, during the Taiping time, near Kwei-yuen, they are mostly closed. Of those which are open, the data regarding yield, and all other particulars, which are alone known to the officials concerned, are inaccessible.

If haphazard reports regarding trade were found unreliable lower down the river, how much more is the information which one can gather regarding the exploitation of precious metals, in this land of "floating

words," as the Chinese call idle rumour? The imagination of the Chinese finds a fine field in this subject, eloquently expressed by their magnificent mendacity.

From Yünnan a small quantity of metals, consisting of lead, copper, iron and mercury, finds its way to Nan-ning; but opium is the principal article of trade from that province. The traffic is said to be attended by great difficulty and some risk, the carriage being by porterage, across a long stretch of wild, mountainous, country, from Yünnan-fu.

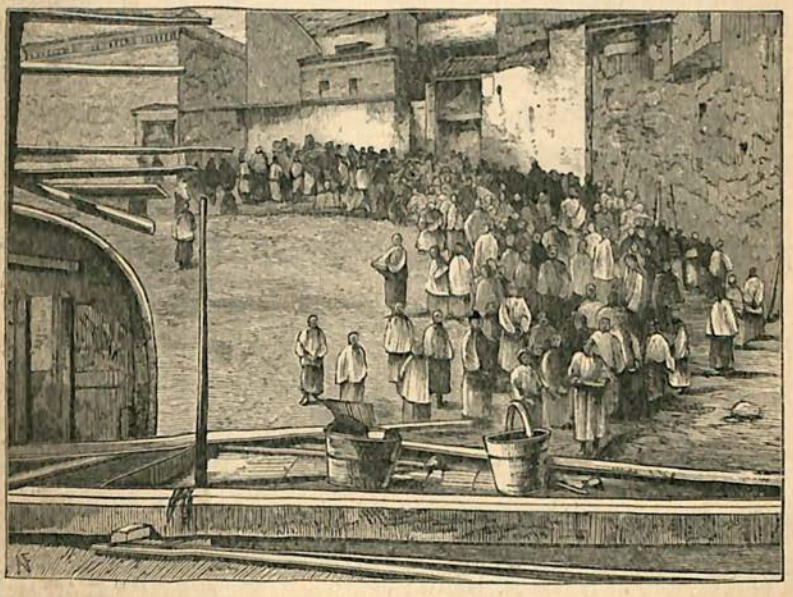
It comes mainly *viâ* Kwang-nan-fu to Pe-sê or Pak-shik, the head point of navigation of the West river. The drug is said to be packed in cases containing 1000 *taels* weight, and to be carried in high bamboo baskets, made so as to form a protection against attack in favour of the carrier. The caravans are reported to travel well armed, and to be necessarily so, as they are frequently attacked, the trade being in the hands of a small number of adventurous trading spirits, who face the dangers and fatigues of the journey undauntedly, for the sake of the heavy profit made.

From Taiping-fu on the south-west branch, and from Lung-ngan up the river, sapan wood and anise seed are brought down to Nan-ning. The aniseed and ground-nut oil from Nan-ning are reported to go to Pak-hoi, from which port she draws her foreign goods, either overland direct from Ling-shan, or from Nam-heong, as before described.

The only manufactures at Nan-ning are a rough but strong kind of paper, and brasswork of an indifferent

quality. The brass is used for making "Kin-kwa," or the so-called gold-leaf used for worship.

We were unfortunately prevented from landing at Nanning-fu by the hostility of the people, which was reported to us as we neared that city, and became evident on our arrival there. The moment we arrived in the evening, policemen were sent down to guard our



CROWD AT NAN-NING.

boat, and early next morning a petty official came, with a gunboat from the Prefect, saying he hoped that, on account of the unruly and inimical feeling of the people, it was not our intention to land.

I sent the tin-chai, as usual, with our cards to the Prefect, saying that we had been escorted by a gunboat from Wu-chau, and asked whether any farther escort

was necessary beyond Nan-ning; also whether there would be any objection to our landing at Nan-ning, in order to see something of the city.

In reply the Prefect dwelt upon the possible danger of showing ourselves in the city when people were so turbulent, lawless, and difficult of management at *ordinary* times. He could not answer for their behaviour now, when hostility to all foreigners had been aroused by the episode of an attack on some Roman Catholic missionaries. The news of our coming had reached the city, and had already been the cause of great excitement amongst the people.

If our business had been the exploration of the province, perhaps we might, notwithstanding these warnings, have ventured ashore, and tested the feelings of the people, for I confess to having felt a strong desire to prove the truth of these fears, which were well founded, however, I firmly believe. But our field lay not here but ahead, and we had two sufficient reasons for not making the experiment (for a possible stoning or pelting with mud, coupled with abusive epithets from the *hoi-polloi*, would not have deterred us); first, that our field of labour proper lay in Yünnan and Laosland; secondly, it would have been madness to imperil our chance of reaching Yünnan by risking some disagreeable incident, which might mean delay or stoppage. Besides which, the Viceroy had been kind enough, outside the stipulation of treaty rights, to give us assistance, especially in the letter to the Pe-sê Sub-Prefect, on the implied condition that we should act, not only with dis-

cretion, but with the view of preventing the provocation of any unfriendly feeling on the part of the people.

Having this in view, I should have considered it folly on our part, and an unworthy requital for Mr. Hewlett's and the Viceroy's kind assistance, as well as the confidence placed in us, to have landed at Nan-ning.

It was, however, a serious disappointment, for we had hoped not only to have seen the inside of the place for ourselves, instead of trusting to report, but what was more important, to have there gained valuable information regarding the country lying to the south and south-west, especially near the Tonquin border.

I wished to learn about the people and tribes (independent and semi-independent), their customs, mode of government, and the relations existing between them and the Imperial Government; and we might have gained additional information regarding the country, in the vicinity of Nan-ning itself, beyond what we had gathered here and there by the way.

The tin-chai, on his return, told us that the Prefect had taken precautions for keeping order in the town; that a guard of some forty soldiers, in addition to police, was stationed at the On-sat gate, near which we lay; and that a patrol was maintaining order in the more crowded parts of the city main thoroughfares.

Whilst he was at the yamen, the Prefect had, with evident anxiety, issued orders for men to keep watch on the actions of any crowd, which was immediately to be dispersed.

Having decided to proceed without delay, we got our

package of letters ready, and sent it to the Prefect, with my card and a polite note, begging him to be kind enough to have the package forwarded to the Consul at Canton, to whose care it was addressed. A civil message was returned, saying it had been enclosed in an official letter, with a receipt for the package from the yamen postmaster, indicating that the packet would be despatched by the first opportunity.

We had been advised in Canton, by one whose opinion was worth having, always to note, on the outside of any communication to be sent for delivery in Canton, either by private hand, or by the local post, "so much to be paid on delivery."

I was amused at the *naïve* manner in which the tin-chai remarked, on my expressing anxiety, regarding the safe delivery of the packet, which contained a portion of my journal, "I think it will reach safe; they know money is to be paid for delivery." On my saying,—"but the packet was enclosed in a Chinese official envelope, no one would see it," he shook his head (with a smile which told of my ignorance of Chinese character), remarking, "they will know; somebody was sure to see that packet before it was closed." He evidently placed little reliance on the official post, as compared with the magic of one thousand cash, or one dollar, which would be the reward of some one. His anticipations were correct, and the spell worked, I am happy to say.

There is nothing striking in the appearance of Nanning. Between the edge of the bank and the crenellated city wall, houses are built. As usual along the river, it

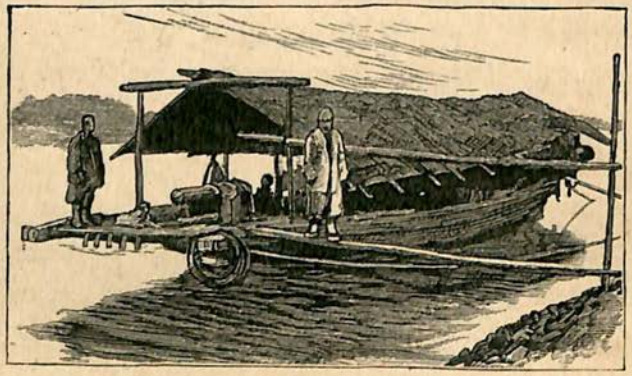
has suburbs, *extra muros*, at either end. Opposite the city, on the southern bank, is a far-stretching village, with a group of joss-houses at the lower end, and the shore lined with craft, the majority being market and fishing boats, whilst the trading boats lie under the city bank opposite. The upper suburb is said to be the resort of immense numbers of passing gamblers, the floating population of boatmen on this river being all addicted to this reprehensible practice.

Captain Chow reported to us, after we left, that the placard, which we had heard of below Wu-chau, had been posted in this gambling quarter of the city, and gave, as details, that the proclamation set forth, that two foreigners were coming to Nan-ning; that it remained to be seen whether the patriotic feelings of the people would allow the red barbarians to come to their country, and destroy their religion and take away the "Po," "the precious wealth," or good fortune of the place. It then referred to the Roman Catholic episode, and lastly, concreting the abstract ideas contained in the above, in a very straightforward way, offered the price of fifty taels to the first man who should give information of our coming, and two hundred taels (about fifty pounds sterling) for each of our heads, should we venture into their country, to the man who should be plucky enough to do the deed.

There was so much detail in all this, that one's suspicions were aroused, and I felt doubtful how much of fact, and how much of fancy, there was in the thrilling recital. But the rumours we had heard lower down

were now proved to be correct, and it became quite evident why the Wu-chau Prefect, and other officials right through, had given us gunboats on the river, and police-guards at the larger towns.

The anxiety of the Nan-ning Prefect that we should not land, coupled with his courteous treatment, his reference to the Roman Catholic missionaries, and the fact that the placard of 1870 (of which I have given an extract from a facsimile copy) had been posted in Tsun-chau-fu and Nan-ning, made the relation by no



A GUNBOAT STATION.

means improbable. Besides which, we had not found the head boatman in any way a man given to exaggeration, and I believe that, perhaps excepting a little natural colouring, the story had a strong substratum of truth in it. No doubt the placard was the work of agitators, literati probably.

Nan-ning has always had a bad name for its inhabitants, and is difficult to keep in order, and the Prefect's life at any time, far more when peregrinating "learned men

of the West" come poking about his district, cannot be an easy one.

Close by our boat, at Nan-ning, lay that of some petty mandarin, who came from Ho-nan, we were told, with the usual number of servants and hangers-on, so inseparable from any one holding office, no matter what, in China.

These attachés, with the hordes of petty subordinates, clerks, secretaries, and so on, "rats under the altar," as the Chinese proverb tersely calls them, are to be found swarming in every yamen in the country. They hedge in each official so securely, that it is most difficult for him to act independently of them; and impossible for any one to approach the great man, except through the medium of them, which can only be effected by the almighty "squeeze," in some shape or another.

This system holds good from the lowest to the highest; whether it be the peasant wishing to address the Sub-Magistrate, or the Prefect seeking audience of a Viceroy; it is the same story, and no doubt the system is the same in reference to the approach to the Imperial throne.

A mandarin has no intimacies outside his yamen. It is from these hordes of unpaid hangers-on that the people of China mainly suffer, and not so much from the officials themselves, who are, in the main, laborious to a degree which would be hardly credited in Europe, and are not unseldom passing honest.

Considering the wretched pittances allowed as salaries, it is to be wondered at that peculation and squeezing are not more the practice. Cases of high probity and

capacity are not wanting, and one well-known case, that of a high Chinese official (son-in-law of the notorious Commissioner Lin of the Opium War), who died not long ago, furnishes an illustration. After holding the highest offices for years, he died in poverty, and the expenses of his funeral were defrayed by the State.

On board the mandarin's boat were several handsome

MANDARIN AND WIFE, IN STATE ROBES.

dogs, common to the hilly country of Kwang-si and the adjoining provinces. They are somewhat like the hill-dogs found in the hills in South-eastern Burmah, and probably elsewhere; clever, intelligent-looking animals, with bushy hair and tails. A similar breed of dogs is said to exist at Pe-sê, where we hoped to see, and, if possible, secure a couple as companions. The man-

darin was preparing to go ashore, and his followers were all in their best attire and looked very gorgeous.

The dresses of the officials, even the petty ones, are handsome and costly looking; the wardrobe of many an official is worth 2000 dollars (about £400), an enormous sum. But it must be remembered that a Chinaman's clothes are a stock-in-trade to him. They have clothes to suit all weathers and all occasions. I have been told that a witty Chinaman has said in regard to this subject, "Englishmen live in their houses; Chinamen in their clothes!"

The boat had finely decorated windows, and the official round, flat, red umbrella (everything official is red) on the top of the boat, and the official tablets on the side were prominent; whilst some pots of flowers and a bird-cage, containing a thrush called "Kwa-mi," or "pictured eyebrow," probably denoted the near presence of the fair sex. These thrushes, well trained, are held in great esteem. Altogether the gay and artistic air of our neighbour made the more modest "Chow-hing," our boat, look rather mean.

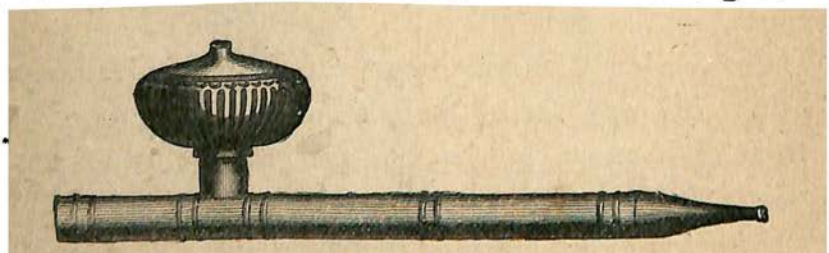
On leaving Nan-ning, our captain crossed to the other side, and waited there till the tin-chai returned from his message, leaving the precious packet of ours which we had sent to the Prefect.

There was evidently *some* reason for this crossing over, and this view was substantiated by a little episode which occurred. Happening to be jotting down what one could see of the city shore, I chanced to notice our little

canoe, which we carried astern of our boat, being quickly drawn up. Two or three of the boatmen's heads appeared over the side of the stern cabin, and a box suddenly was handed down with, what seemed to me, anxious looks cast all round to see if any one were looking. Then three men jumped in, took the paddles and pulled swiftly, but with no signs of haste, to the city shore, towards the suburbs furthest removed from the Customs stations.

Using the field-glass, I could see the canoe make its way through some craft lying on the outside line of the boats near the shore, and then it was lost to view. There may have been nothing in all this, but as it was the first, and only, time of such an occurrence, or indeed of the canoe leaving the boat to our knowledge, I have more than a suspicion that the box contained opium, the foreign article being so heavily taxed as to make it a most expensive luxury, and one only indulged in by the more affluent people, of whom there are few.

The "black smoke," as opium is called in China, in use here is the Yünnan article; while a little is grown



AN OPIUM-PIPE.

at Pe-sê, for both of which the price is very low compared with the foreign drug, which, on account of its

cost, is seldom asked for. Nearly all that does find its way into the province is said to be smuggled, a lucrative but dangerous profession, for the punishments on detection are very heavy. Any one accustomed to the Yünnan drug does not care for the foreign article, it is asserted, in spite of, or perhaps on account of, its stronger flavour and greater narcotic power.

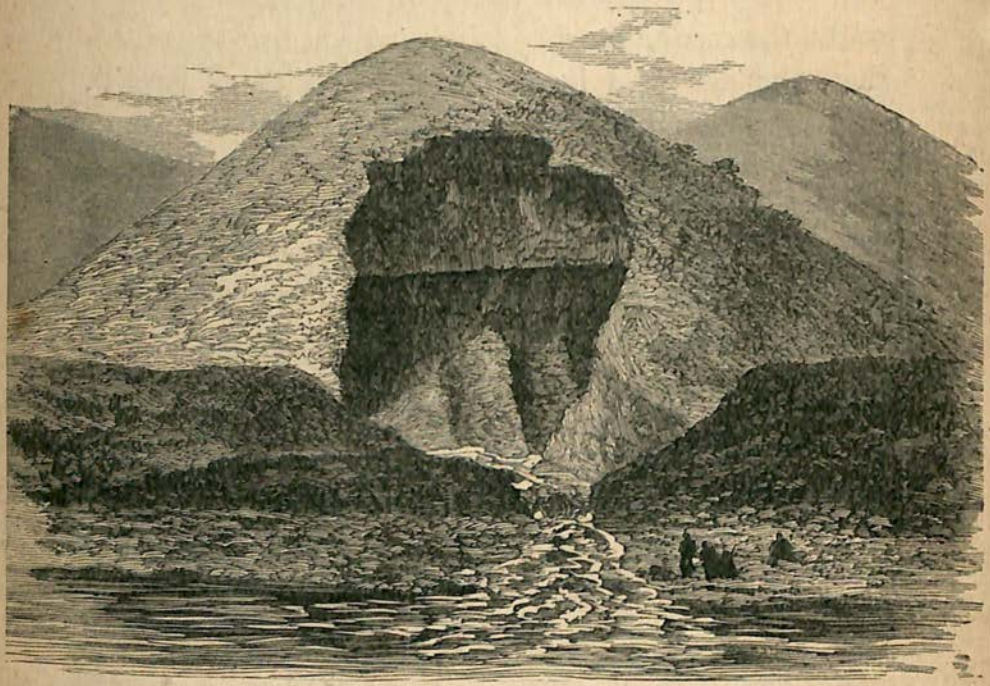
Perhaps the captain's anxiety for us to leave Nan-ning may be partly accounted for by this little episode! We rallied the captain on this point, and when we suggested that "he did good by stealth and blushed to have it known," he looked, we thought, rather shamefaced!

The boatmen on this river make use of every opportunity to smuggle salt and opium into the interior, and when they have a mandarin of any position on board, it is said that they invariably try to introduce a good haul. Their boats are not liable to be searched, or, at any rate, are not subjected to such close inspection; and it often pays a boatman to take a mandarin at a low rate, on account of the sum which he may make by smuggling. Judging by this standard, probably Captain Chow should have taken us for nothing, and perhaps even have paid us a handsome sum for patronising his boat!

At only two or three Customs stations were we examined (and that only after the most cursory manner) by some three or four underlings or subordinates, who came with iron-pointed sticks, for probing packages, and their visit seemed more due to curiosity than anything else. Only once did we meet with treatment which was

wanting in courtesy. This was mainly due to our having Mr. Hong-beng-kaw as companion, and the tin-chai, who could converse with them, no doubt treated them in Cantonese with suitable hauteur.

Ordinary travellers meet, from all accounts, with far other treatment, being delayed, treated with the greatest rudeness, and of course "squeezed" whenever occasion offers.



SLIP IN HILL, NEAR NAN-NING.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Bare hills—Rains expected—Light equipment for march—Branch of river to the S. W. of Kwang-si—Time-distance to Lung-chau-fu—Sam-kong-fu—Brickfields—A stroll—"Lily feet"—The peasantry—The husband's return—A welcome—Avoiding curiosity—Difference of dialects—Paucity of population—Terracing hill-sides—Heavy manuring—Primitive implements—Buffaloes—Visit to a farm—High flood marked by tablet—60 feet rise of river—Cock Robin—Poverty of fishermen—Their huts—Stunted timber—Grass for fuel—Buffaloes plentiful—Small ponies—Oxen—Effect of flood—Head-dress of peasantry mistaken for mourning—White an inauspicious colour—Barbarians of the "Two Kwangs"—The Prussians of China—Gold Summit Pagoda—Kam-ling—Building stone—Brickwork—Stone but little used—Yu-tsün and Kow-yu-tsün—Two-storied temple—Peaked range—River cliffs.

WE progressed but a short distance from Nan-ning through open country; and for the next two days passed through low, bare, undulating hilly country, with small villages; few meriting other designation than hamlets, surrounded by clusters of trees and clumps of bamboo, and near them patches of cultivated fields.

The cultivation and timber to be seen were invariably near the villages only, the rest having a bare and barren look and the hills a reddish hue, suggesting a great degree of heat in the summer, which begins on the 5th of May, according to the Chinese term.

Although the rains are set down for the 20th of February, we had had as yet only threatenings; but they evidently were close at hand, and we were anxious to know what

sort of weather we should have at Pe-sê and in our march across Yünnan. The rains form an adversary difficult to encounter at all times, but more especially in our then light marching order, which we hoped would aid us in getting over the ground. We intended to carry almost nothing beyond our instruments, bedding, a few necessary clothes, and some medicines, some dozens of tinned soup and a little brandy, for emergency as medicine.

Some twenty-five miles above Nan-ning, after a long bend southward, a branch of the river,—a fine stream, about two hundred yards broad,—runs to the south-west of Kwang-si. On this lie the most important towns of that part of the province, namely Sin-ning, Tai-ping and Lung-chau-fu.

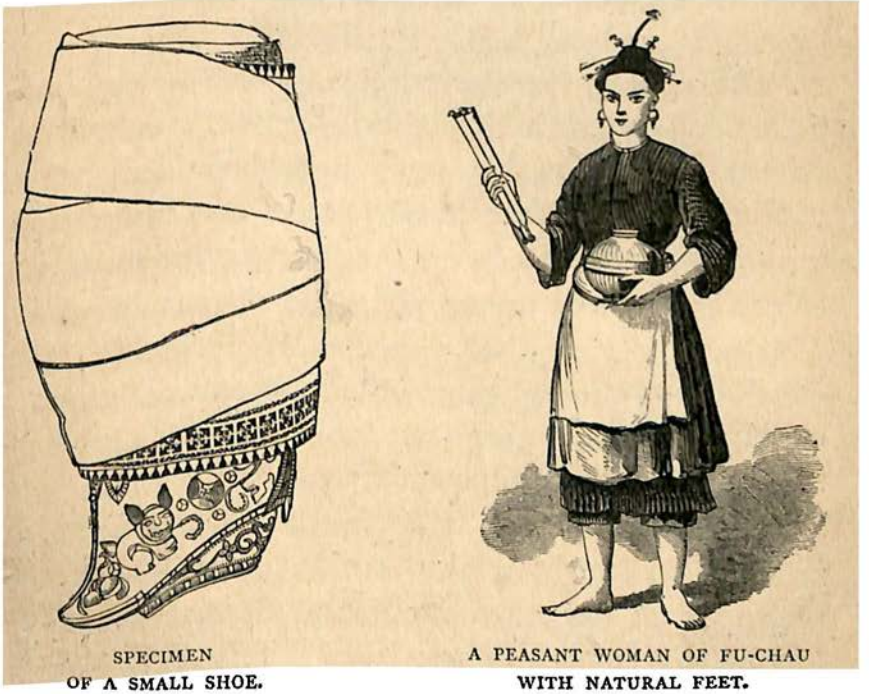
The journey *to* the latter city is said to take eight to ten days from Nan-ning, although not more than two-thirds of the distance from that place to Pe-sê, which our boatman hoped to accomplish in ten days. No doubt this is due to the bad navigation of the river.

In the apex made by the forking of the stream lies the village of Sam-kong-hü, a place of no importance, while on the other side are a couple of Custom boats, and close by some brickfields.

We strolled for a short distance up the river bank, past some patches of cultivation, in which a number of women and children were hard at work, in a bean-field. These poor country women and children, toil and care-worn, have none of the affected airs of modesty of their more civilised sisters, with the "golden lily" feet.

Poor creatures! Joyless as is their life, consisting of

one round of constant rude labour from dawn till dark, in field or home, they at least enjoy exemption from the "club-foot," that deformity, enforced by senseless fashion. They are at liberty to see a stranger pass by, and even address one without that extravagant prudery, which is so prized by Chinamen in their countrywomen.



SPECIMEN OF A SMALL SHOE.

A PEASANT WOMAN OF FU-CHAU WITH NATURAL FEET.

One lady, a pleasant, honest-featured creature, with whom we held our somewhat limited conversation, for the *patois* could not be understood by Mr. Hong-beng-kaw, answered us fearlessly, and with no *mauvaise honte*. She was evidently unlike that wife of the famous Chinese general Sse-ping-kwei, who, when her lord and master returned after many years' absence, and found her in the

mulberry field gathering the leaves, was addressed with the usual Chinese formality as "eldest sister!" The General was answered with the broad sleeve held up to hide her from the stranger's gaze, and with what is held to be a well-timed rebuke for his want of courtesy in venturing to address a lady. This scene forms a favourite episode in a Chinese historical drama, the lady's conduct being highly admired.

The country in the neighbourhood is bare and barren, covered with hummocks; and little cultivation on any scale is to be seen. Both here, and before Nan-ning, I found that the adoption of the Chinese dress was of great assistance in avoiding curiosity, or suspicion, on the part of the people. They no doubt took us for some poor specimens of their country; probably from some out-of-the-way part of the enormous empire, which comprises so many huge provinces—almost countries, many of them might be styled.

There are so many dialects—the difference is so marked, one might almost say languages — and the provincial dialects differ as much as German does from English, as far as one can learn. This difference of language, objectionable as it is, had its advantage for us, for we should, otherwise, often have been placed in an awkward position, when we were addressed by some villager, and found ourselves unable to reply.

Instead of a tryingly curious crowd round our boat when we halted at a village, or town, or the prying looks of passers-by when strolling along, which we used to experience during the first days of our journey, whilst

we wore European costume, we now found ourselves hardly ever the subject of any curiosity. The evening that we arrived at Nan-ning, we walked with the tin-chai up to the village opposite the city, and met a number of people—men, women and children—none of whom took any notice of us. If we had not quite succeeded in acquiring the indescribable *cachet* of the Chinese literati class, which is as difficult to assume as the aristocratic air of Europe, we seemed, at any rate, to have reached the summit of our ambition, and passed for average Chinamen of some sort, indifferently well.

We had no reason to alter the opinion expressed as to the country lower down the river, regarding the seeming paucity of the population, and our statement of so much culturable land remaining untilled. The prevalent idea that the whole of China is one vast garden, receives a rude shock in the part of Southern China through which we had lately passed.

Terracing the hillsides is not carried out to anything like the extent to which one's reading regarding China had led one to expect; quite the contrary. No doubt much of this is due to the fact, that many of the hills, especially those bare hillsides we passed above Nan-ning, are unfitted for the plough, except near their bases; but that is not the main reason, I believe; it is the want of population.

The cultivator makes up for the want of better implements, by laborious, untiring work; heavy manuring, and repeated turning over of the soil. Their few implements are of the most primitive description,

especially the plough, which is wooden, with an iron-edged share.

Buffaloes are plentiful in the neighbourhood of Nan-ning, but not after we passed that town; no doubt because there rice cultivation, for which the buffalo is used, is mostly in vogue; while beyond Indian corn and ground-nut seem the staple products.

One evening we strolled through a hamlet, a cluster of farm, or, more properly, garden-steadings; the houses were poor-looking habitations, being built of mud mostly, but clean, which might probably be accounted for by the recent New Year renovation. One or two of the better houses were of good brick, well set in admirable mortar. The goodwill of the poor people was more than once shown to us; we were walking with Mr. Hong-beng-kaw alone, unattended by any attachés who sometimes are apt to be officious, when we were addressed, and asked to come in and partake of their cheer.

In one steading, we noticed the cattle being driven in by the good wife, while the little children and the father came up and had a talk with us. Some carts, of very rude construction, were standing by. The out-buildings were built on the level of the ground, being low roofed and wretched looking, but the dwelling was of a better description and raised from the ground.

In the centre of the village we noticed a fine lime-stone slab, which marked, as could be read from the inscription on it, the flood-level of last year, a very high one, and which is reported to have done great damage

to the villages along this river. We had heard of it in several places lower down, and of the ravages committed by it, and I was anxious to have something reliable in the shape of information on this very subject; and here it was, carefully recorded, in a manner which would have done credit to many a civilised municipality. It measured roughly, by our calculation, sixty feet above the present water-level—the lowest of the year!

The grindstones in the village were all of this same limestone, a fine grained, hard stone, admirable for the purpose. We had a chat with a small group of the village people on the bank, before returning to our boat, and delighted the hearts of the people, while alarming the little one, by presenting a copy of "Cock Robin" to a chubby-faced urchin, swaddled in a padded jacket twice her own size.

The fishery on the river is leased out, but on what terms we could not discover. Fishery seems to be carried on to a large extent, judging from the number of fishing-boats on the river. These fisher-people, and with them may be classed the sawyers, are, by all accounts, poorer even than the agriculturists, who are poor enough, in all conscience.

Every now and then, we came across some wretched huts, built on the rocky bank, composed of a few cross-sticks with grass roofing. They were hardly high enough for a human being to crawl into,

but are made to serve as habitations for the fishermen of the poorer class.

Some, who are better off, congregate in small hamlets, where the huts are all mud, and of the most wretched appearance. The sawyers live in similarly shaped structures, built of slabs or planks, with grass laid over. The timber along this river, mainly fir, is stunted in growth and poor in quality, as indicated before.

A large quantity of timber is yearly exported from Kwang-si, but it comes mainly from the south-west. The best is that from the north and north-west of the province. The timber from that part comes mainly down the Pak-ho and Fu-ho; one quality, highly esteemed for coffin-making throughout China, comes by the former river from Lau-chau-fu.

Wood and grass are largely in use as fuel, and a large quantity of these and bamboos goes down the river on scows and rafts, which we repeatedly met, and had noticed lower down.

Buffaloes are more plentiful in the neighbourhood of Nan-ning than anywhere we observed on the West river, their price being from fifteen to twenty taels. We saw some ponies of a very ragged, and wretched, shaggy-looking kind, few of them more than eleven hands, which in Burmah no one would own. Seemingly they were of the same stock as the Shan ponies, brought to Burmah. They are said to come from Yünnan, and sell at from ten to twenty taels; oxen, which are very scarce, sell at eight to twelve taels each.

The villages along this part of the river were said to have suffered severely from the inundation of last year, which rose above 60 feet in August. Food supplies

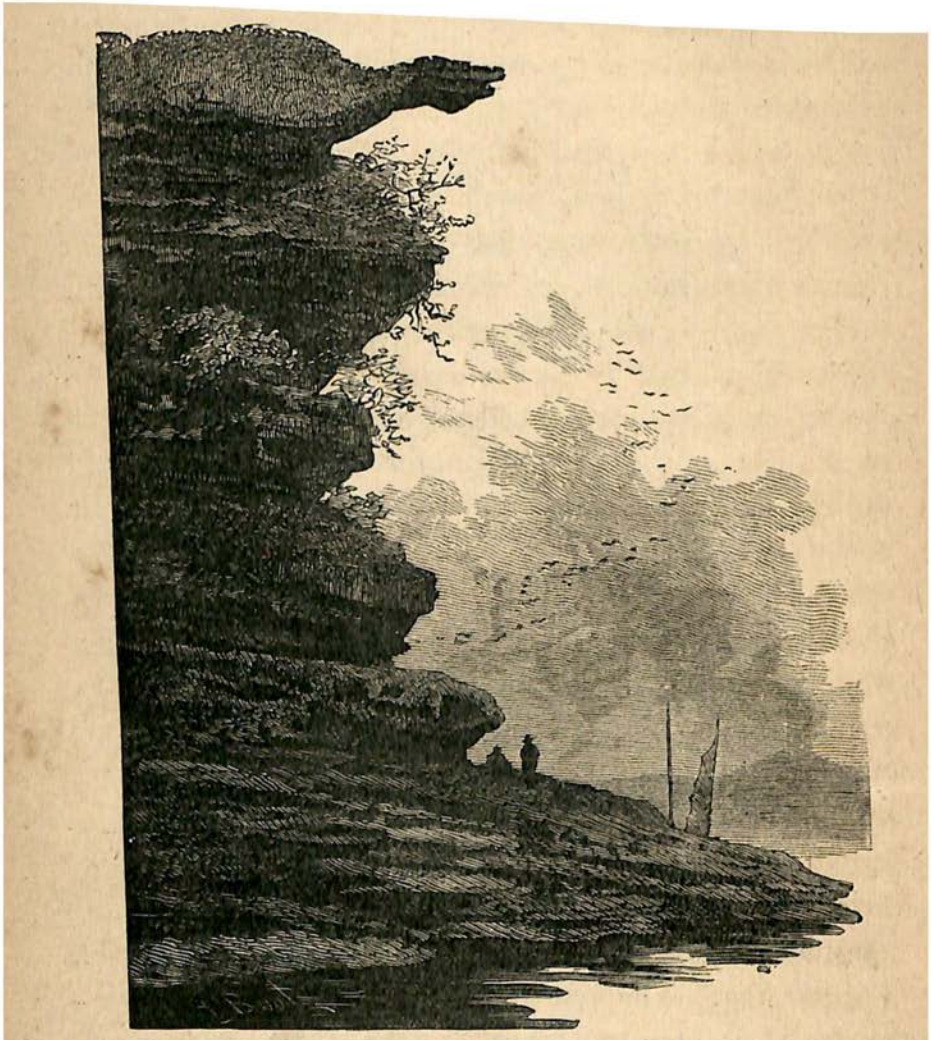
have therefore been scarce, and more expensive this year. The rebuilding of many a village retaining-wall, and of the foundations of the houses, which from time to time we witnessed, gave us abundant proofs of the violence and ferocity of the floods on this river, which must be a terror to all living on its banks.

Below the branch, which goes off to Lung-chau-fu, we met several canoe-loads of people crossing at the ferries, and noticed, as we at first thought, that the women were in mourning, as they wore round the head a white fillet, which is the customary sign of bereavement.

On meeting such parties later on, we could not accept this as the explanation, for all the villages could hardly be in mourning. Inquiry at last elicited that the white head-gear was not mourning fillets, but the usual head-dress worn by a number of the peasantry in these parts, though not by all. It turned out to be a white cotton kerchief bound round the head, so as to conceal the hair, and was tied in a knot behind. The custom is probably adopted on the score of economy, although we could elicit no reason for it from the people themselves; all they could say was that it was their custom. White is considered in China to be an inauspicious colour to wear, and is only adopted in case of mourning. The rest of their costume was that in use by their countrywomen in the south of China, though of the poorest description.

The dialect here was so much altered, that even the tin-chai, a Cantonese, could not understand anything beyond a few of the simplest words, and those only

when slowly spoken. He told me that in the Nan-ning Prefect's yamen he had heard some of the court subor-



"CROCODILE POINT," SI-KIANG RIVER.

dinates talking a language of which he could not understand a syllable. It turned out to be the Nan-ning dialect. When I expressed my astonishment that the

change should be so great, for the diversity known to exist in the provincial dialects of China had been heard of by us, I was told that it was not to be wondered at, as these provincial people of the "Two Kwangs" (*i.e.* Kwang-tung and Kwang-si) were barbarians, and hardly counted for Chinamen proper. It was comforting to know that some one, in this not too friendly region, divided the distinction with us of being considered barbarians!

There seems to be a ruggedness, or angularity, remarkable in these people, which distinguishes them from the northern country folk. This is found to exhibit itself in their language, dress, bearing, and character. Even in their ornaments, art, and music the same characteristic is said to be traceable. This angularity, if it may so be termed, is more easy to recognise than to describe. Whatever it is, it makes the man less amiable. Perhaps it may be best described, though doubtless the comparison may be open to the charge of loose generalising, by saying that the men of these two provinces are distinguished from their fellow-countrymen by that unenviable *something*, which marks out the Prussian in Germany.

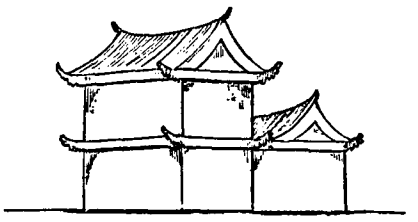
A couple of miles above the branching of the river, the Kam-ling, "Gold Summit Pagoda," is met on the south bank, and about five miles farther the market town, of the same name, on the same bank. This pagoda, situated on a site with a fine view and opposite the strong rapids of the same name, is a handsome three-storied and octagonal structure built in grey

brick, richly ornamented and in better taste than usual. The structure had just been completed; indeed the colouring was not quite dry.

It seems curious with the stone to be had along the river, which seemed excellent and abundant, judging from the occasional sections showing along the banks, and from the material employed for the stone steps and face-walls of their towns and villages, that brick should be so largely employed. We came across brick-works nearly every day, and evidently a considerable number of people find employment in this class of manufacture.

Lower down, granite was occasionally met with in the older temples and guild-houses, and in magnificent slabs and columns, but in none of the newer buildings; whilst higher up, where limestone of a good quality became more common, we never saw the stone put to any use, except for rice-grinding mortars, as shown in the sketch.

Some ten miles above the last-named rapid, after a large sandy island, we passed several hamlets, and a market town named Lo-long-hü. Two villages, close by each other, Yu-tsün and Kow-yu-tsün, stand on the north bank. Hard by, there is a handsome two-storied temple of a structure which we had not seen before on the river, with a smaller one-storied building alongside. This is called the Wai-long-miao.



We halted for the night close by this, and in view of a fine, serrated, sharply-peaked range of hills, lying to the north, and seemingly about ten miles distant.

During the day we had passed several curious examples of the manner in which the river cuts into the red sandstone hillocks, or knolls lying along the bank. The immense caverns made in the faces of these knolls, almost from their top, present a curious appearance.

CHAPTER XXV.

"River of Nine Turns" — Mural limestone — Caves — Waterfalls — Burial-grounds—Dislike to rain—Dirtiness of Chinese—Refreshing — Lung-on — Inaccuracy of French map — Decadence of town — Friendliness of people—The shoe-test — No longer a barbarian — Orchards—Dress of peasant-women — Wooden clogs — Precipitous banks — Ha-ngan—Gorge—Open country — Miniature mountains—Overhanging cliffs—A field for the artist—Cascades, subterranean passages, and blow-holes—A cave-dweller—Chaffering—Imperturbability of the Chinese.

FROM the 1st of March we began to pass through country much more cultivated than we had previously seen, the banks being more wooded, and farms and hamlets showing more signs of life, with cattle grazing on the banks, and boats moving on the river. Curious pinnacled rocks, similar in character to those seen on the plains lower down the stream, soon after leaving Canton, approach the river and begin to crop out on its banks.

We passed soon after a series of sharp angular bends, one after the other, called Kau-kuk-ho, or "river of nine turns," which took us four hours to accomplish, and which might be cut off to a mile and a half. A number of brick and two lime-kilns were met, and we halted close to one of the former, next a small hamlet.

The character of the river had now altered, its banks becoming walls of limestone rock, in which cave formation was evident throughout, and farther up we actually

saw caves of some size. Several waterfalls leaping over the rocky banks, numberless cascades, and a few subterranean water-ways were passed soon after; these gave an air of beauty and a pleasant relief to the wild look of these seemingly interminable walls of rock.

Black "needled" ranges are to be seen on every side, and the same rocks close in on the river, which bristles with them. These ranges of limestone, black in colour, presented, with their "pinnacled" or "needled" formation, the fantastic appearance of an irregular saw, the teeth of which are long and sharp-pointed. When

occurring in detached pinnacles, they have somewhat the appearance of a mass of rather ill-used ninepins, strewn about upright, in a haphazard way.

A curious phenomenon presented itself in the appearance of the burial-grounds in this neighbourhood, which had the look of groups of people moving about the plain. They were strewn about on very slight rising grounds, probably because the rocky hillsides present no suitable sites for the favourite Chinese method of interment, which is on the side of a hill. They prefer the side or top of a hill, or a ravine or copse, wherever, in fact, some pleasant view may most advantageously be had, and where the place of interment will be retired and dry. Where the country is flat, mounds and coffins are scattered about, preference being given to any slight elevation.

Great attention is paid to the Fung-shui, or geomantic influence of the locality, and the grave always looks down-hill if possible. The graves were here of truncated conical shape, about 6 feet in diameter at the bottom, and 18 inches on top, made of stone or brickwork (probably the former), cemented over very substantially, and with a convoluted spiral pattern traced all over the outside.

There were some rectangular gravestones in handsome limestone, with inscriptions, and we succeeded in photographing several, as well as the "needled" ranges, which were close by. These gravestones, when seen at a distance, standing scattered here and there over the plain, presented the appearance of a number of people moving about, as I have said, and we were at first deluded in this way.

The tracking hereabouts was over most difficult, broken, rocky ground, with high grasses, creepers, and bushes, in places from 40 to 60 feet above the river level, necessitating a very long tow-line to escape the sharp rocks. As if this was not harassing enough labour, the rain came on, and compelled the men to take to their soyi, properly chao-yi, or grass-coats and bamboo hats. Poor fellows! All Chinamen have an antipathy to rain, and they certainly looked miserable enough. Yet they never feared the river, when only up to the hip. Between that and their necks no water ever found its way.

Occasionally the boatmen might be seen with a tiny tub in front of them filled with hot water, into which, after rubbing their faces, they inserted their feet, and

worked away, with a look on their faces which plainly said that they thought the episode a highly virtuous action. Tubbing is not a weakness with Chinamen, and for the toilet all that is used is a basin of tepid water and a cloth, not erring on the side of cleanliness.

Some one has remarked, with reference to this, that a Chinaman never looks so dirty as when trying to clean himself. Got up in his silk attire he bears inspection from the washing point of view, for his imperfections are hidden; but in *déshabille*, he is like many a pleasant or beautiful landscape or picture, a thing that does not bear looking into.

I shall never forget my feelings one evening at a *partie carrée* on a flower-boat, given by some Chinese gentlemen in Canton, on seeing the attendant bring dirty hot-watered cloths, with which they mopped their faces every now and then. They begged me to try it, and said with wonderful *naïveté*, that it was refreshing!

Lung-on (Lung-ngan), is a walled town lying in a small plain, on the south side of the river; on the opposite bank is a small hamlet and a road leading to S'se-ern-fu, a considerable prefectural city, which was said to be situated towards the north-east, but how far we could not ascertain.

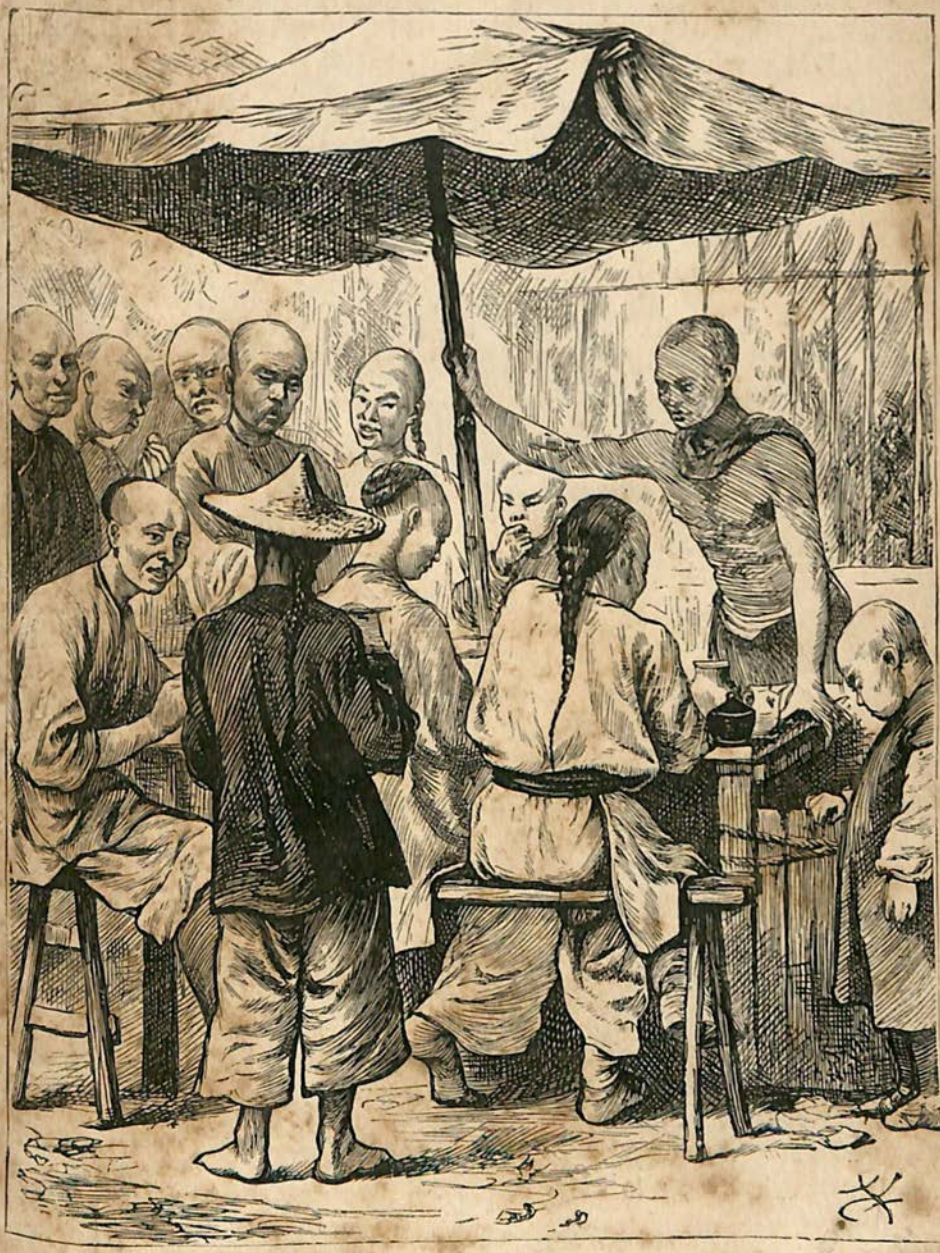
There seemed to be some doubt as to whether Tu-yang and S'se-ern-fu are correctly placed on our maps. I would suggest investigation as to this by the future traveller.

Lung-ngan presents much the same appearance as many of the towns already met and described. Here we

again saw the same crumbling walls, originally of massive construction; the cannon and bell, found half-buried and abandoned on the wall; the remains of past glories in ruined yamens and temples; the wretched-looking suburbs lying outside the walls, and the place showing no signs of vitality, or life, beyond a few hucksters' shops, lining the main street and entrance gateway. The city of Lung-ngan, once a place of considerable importance, is now little better than the ruined pile, evacuated by the Taiping rebels, and the home of a handful of wretched, poverty-stricken villagers. It affords another instance of the great calamity which, quite apart from the Taiping rebellion, has befallen all the cities along this water-way.

If our visit to Lung-ngan gave rise to dispiriting reflections, we had cause to retain some agreeable recollections of the place. Here, for the first time in any town on the West river, did we find the people not only far from unfriendly, or hostile, but showing an amount of simple good-nature, which fairly astonished us.

In our wanderings through the town, down the main street and on the ramparts at the back of the town, where we strolled in order to obtain a view of the plain and surrounding country, we met with no scowling looks nor angry cries of "Fan-qui lo." What seemed still more strange was that we were not subjected to that trying curiosity which knows no restraints. We were courteously treated by all whom we met, and, engaging in conversation with a few young men, who were loiterers at the southern gate, we were offered not only such in-



A STREET-STALL. (*To face p.* 178, Vol. I.)

formation as they had at their command, but also their guidance to a large cave lying in a hill to the south, close to a temple. Unfortunately our limited stay would not permit us to go. The little curiosity we attracted was, doubtless, partly due to our Chinese costume, but not entirely, by any means, as an experience later in the day gave us abundant evidence.

We were amused by the remarks made by our Lung-ngan friends, who accompanied us on to the city walls, who were uncertain whether we were foreigners from the west, real barbarians from the "cut-off regions,"—as the Chinese, with unenviable self-conceit, name all countries not belonging to the Flowery Land,—or only fellow-countrymen from some distant province.

My friend C. W. wore English shoes, and, after a warm discussion as to our nationality, Sir Oracle declared, "the one with the strange leather shoes, yes, he is a foreigner; but the other, do you not see his Chinese shoes, he is a man from the north." So I, rude western savage, owe a debt of gratitude to Lung-ngan for owning me as a civilised son of Cathay.

The surrounding plain is under rice cultivation; the outer suburbs of the town, and a few hamlets scattered here and there, have vegetable gardens, and clusters of fruit-trees, in one or two cases almost meriting the name of orchards, encircling them. At the rear of the town, and some few miles distant, is a range of sharp-peaked hills, at the base of which are several joss-houses.

On our return, we noticed a number of petty shops, the most important in the place, and stopped, for a few

minutes, at a line of stalls next the entrance gate, where edibles, vegetables and fruit, were being sold, mostly by country peasant-women. They were all clad in dark-blue cotton jackets and trousers, with a long kerchief, having a fringe a few inches long, tied round the head. This head-dress is worn by the poorer class of peasantry, to protect them from the cold winds and blazing sun, which, in these hilly regions, is said to be very oppressive in the summer months. These poor people cannot afford covering for their feet in either summer or winter, except wooden clogs, which are generally reserved for use in, or near, their houses.

Passing through reaches of the river, whose sides are dykes of rock, rising from fifty to seventy feet above the water level, of the most jagged and extraordinary shapes, we anchored, for the night, at the village of Ha-ngan, situated at the end of a wild and beautiful gorge, some four miles in length.

Here a splendid vista of champaign country, undulating and verdant, lying on either side of a long, straight reach of the river, a rarity on this tortuous stream, meets the eye, affording a pleasant relief after the rocky gorges just passed. The walls of rock forming these are of very varied shapes; in places caverned out roughly and irregularly, and rising in sheer masses from the water edge; in other places overhanging the stream in bold, grotesque, and dangerous-looking, though picturesque cubes. They resemble the imitation "mountains" in Chinese gardens, so greatly in favour.

(*To face p.* 181, Vol. I.)

OVERHANGING CLIFF, NEAR HA-NGAN.

In several cases our boat passed underneath these projecting masses, with our tall mast, about forty feet in length, unshipped! It gave one an uneasy sensation to notice that some of these immense eaves of rock had a far from secure appearance, looking as if the huge mass might topple over at any moment, and come crashing

THE HA-NGAN GORGE.

down on the Chou-hing. This uneasy feeling, at times, went far to qualify our appreciation of these weird gorges.

This portion of the river, and indeed the greater length of it, would furnish admirable and innumerable subjects for the artist or photographer, who could leisurely visit these parts. It was greatly to our regret

that we were unable to linger on the way, as our inclination sorely prompted us.

We noticed numerous cascades, and a sub-aqueous air-spring bubbling up strongly on the water surface, and some feet in circumference. Subterranean waterfalls through the stone banks were frequent, while caves were constantly met. While halting to chaffer with an old countryman for firewood, we noticed one of these to be inhabited; a few sticks, covered with grass, serving as protection from the weather, while the floor had some grass strewn about. It seemed a terribly cheerless abode for any human being, though the old firewood-seller, a hard-visaged old man, with by no means an amiable temper, looked a fitting inmate for the rocky cell.

After a lengthy bargain, in which vociferations and excited gestures were largely employed on both sides, our boatmen suspended the operation of shipping the firewood, and pushed off amid a volley from both sides of what, doubtless, was choice vituperation. Notwithstanding our superior force, the old gentleman of the cave, judging from appearances, had the best of the sally. The only thing which seems to upset the imperturbability of Chinamen, and that only among the ill-bred, is a money transaction.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Rudeness at Ha-ngan—Advisability of slow retreat—Our tactics—Custom of burning written papers—The village belle—Airs not graces—Varied river reaches—Serrated limestone hills—Geology of the region—Photographing limestone hills—Pottery works—The tin-chai's help—Sorceresses—Death for desertion—No truants—A Kwang-si Borgia—Courtesy of villagers—Swiftness of gunboat—Incredulous boatmen—"Adding legs to a snake"—A mild murderer—Escape from justice—A marriage procession—Different customs—Ko-hoa—Shung-lam-hü—Change of scenery—Poppy cultivation—Rolling hills—Red-flower firewood—Peaceful aspect of country—Opium poppy grown at various elevations—Native *versus* foreign opium.

AT Ha-ngan we landed in the afternoon, to take a stroll through the town, and, buoyed by the recollections of Lung-ngan, hoped to make a pleasant peregrination. Illusive hope! We had no sooner got ashore and fairly entered this market town, than we were surrounded by a crowd of inquisitive children, and, later on, by a number of lads, who indulged themselves in pressing close to our heels and greeting us with shouts of "Fan-qui lo."

For some time this curiosity was a matter of surprise and nothing else; but the number of the crowd having increased, the shouts gathered strength in an ominous manner, and they began to surge up close on us, till we began to think that discretion, in the shape of as dignified a retreat as two Englishmen in Chinese costume

could command, was the better part of valour; we therefore slowly made our way to our boat.

Not that we were anxious to make our return slow, but that anything approaching a sudden or quick retreat would have probably provoked the open hostility of the crowd in some marked manner. As the town was peculiarly filthy, even for China—and I say this from no sore feeling in the matter—and stones were abundant, we should probably have been subjected to a storm of missiles, enveloped in garbage, by no means to our taste.

A number of the elders of the town were standing at the doorsteps and at the joss-house gate, and said nothing to restrain the rabble behind us. Assuming, or rather trying to assume, that air of indifference which it is such a hollow mockery to counterfeit, we glanced at the temple as we passed: examined the village receptacle for burning written paper; looked in at a better-class shop, and strolled back with such measured gait, and artificial delays, as prudence dictated. We were glad to find ourselves safely ensconced in our ho-tau.

The receptacle for papers mentioned was a fireplace in the centre of a brick chimney, placed in the centre of the town square. It is the custom thus to burn all written papers, and in many villages we have noticed these built receptacles, sometimes of a rectangular form, like the shaft of a very small factory chimney, and sometimes in three or five tiers, something like one of their pagodas in miniature. Both are ugly, but the former bears the palm for hideousness.

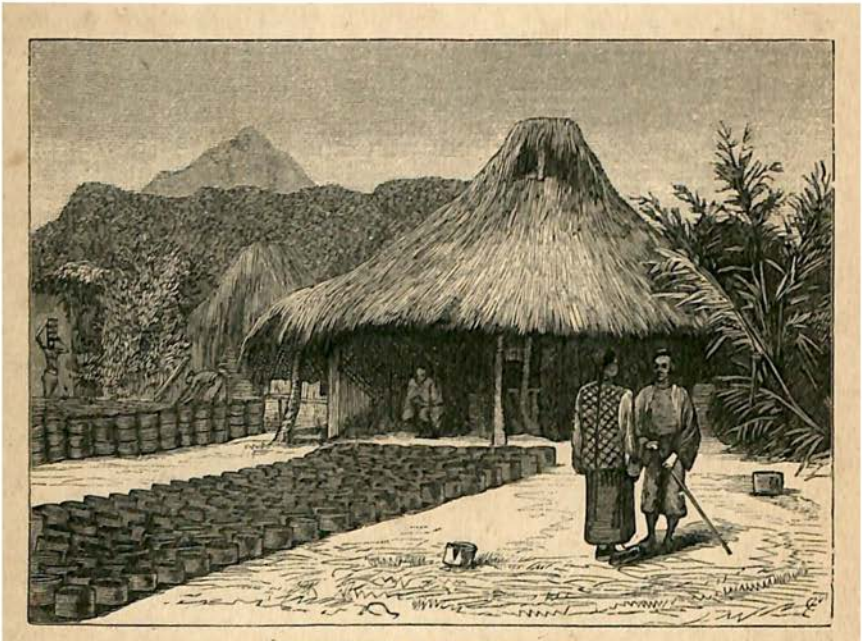
We noticed in one house, which we passed, a family

gathering, at which a number of people were assembled in their holiday clothes, over a feast where rice wine was being served. The central figure was a young lady, some village belle, attired in finery, with paint rudely daubed on the cheeks, attempting to imitate the airs and graces of her town cousin. The rustic beauty, "with lips red and teeth white," the Chinese equivalent for beauty, could not act the part, however, and presented a ridiculous spectacle.

Leaving Ha-ngan we passed through alternate reaches of undulating, cultivated country and gorges; the "pinnacled" ranges advanced gradually close to the river, and we anchored at the feet of one, for the night. These ranges are all limestone, and crystalline of a darkish blue colour, where exposed to the weather. They are jagged on the surface, and furrowed by the rain streams, which water their sides. The outlines are bristling with peaks. The strata are horizontal, as already mentioned. Their strange, jagged appearance has no doubt been caused by water which, in the course of ages, has worn down the level masses of rock gradually, until they have assumed their present form.

The geological formations along this river could be easily studied by any geologist ascending it in the low level season, as we did. The river channel affords, every now and then, admirable opportunity for the purpose of study even to travellers who, like ourselves, had but little knowledge of geology. The upper strata are limestone; beneath that lies older limestone; under that, slate; and lowest of all, granite.

During the day we landed to take some photographs, and succeeded in securing several characteristic views of the ranges. By good fortune, walking along the bank to catch up our boat, we stumbled upon a pottery work, two photographs of which we managed to obtain, while the tin-chai, an invaluable man in many ways, was holding the workmen in converse.



POTTERY WORK, CANTON RIVER.

Their implements, rough and simple though they were, had an ingenuity not to be despised. The old proprietor and his son, a young lad, chatted away frankly with us, and when the workpeople arrived, it being their usual meal-time, the whole process was explained to us with a good-will, which was very pleasant. For tile-making, their principal business, the moulding-machine is made

of a number of battens of wood, fastened together so as to form a circular mould, about 15 inches deep, and 12 inches in diameter. This is divided into four sections, to make four tiles at a time. The work was rough, but rapidly done. The process resembled closely the methods which are in use by the natives in Burmah and India, and merits no description here.

The old gentleman who worked the cutting-machine had a Chung-koo woman for wife. These Chung-koos of Kwang-si have a wide reputation in the neighbouring provinces, as being gifted with the magic art. They are said to be able to place a spell upon their husbands or their lovers.

The tin-chai told us wonderful tales, of the most fabulous kind, regarding their power, some of them from experience amongst his personal acquaintance. Cantonese who settle in Kwang-si, and marry these women, and forsake them, are certain to die after three years, so he informed us! This myth is firmly believed by all the people, and we were told innumerable stories in illustration of it. Whether true or not, it has the desirable effect of at least bringing back truant husbands to the arms of their lady-loves!

One story may be worth mentioning. A Cantonese wished to leave Kwang-si for his native city, intending never to return, and, knowing that his wife had the magic power, told her nothing until the day he was leaving. On the day of his departure he ate and drank nothing in the house, for fear of some magic potion. The wife, on his departure, begged him to write, and gave

him a pen, making him promise to comply with her request. He did so, and after three years—died. The pen was touched with the spell, and he had placed it to his mouth!

We everywhere found the villagers, and still more the peasantry, well-inclined, simple, honest, industrious people; they seemed at all times to be obliging, kind in manner, and even, as far as their means would allow, hospitable. We constantly, in strolling of an evening, chatted with people of every degree, and found them communicative and pleasant; often they asked us in to share their meal, or cup of tea. This is in marked contrast to the people of the larger towns and cities. The peasantry and villagers look upon the stranger with simple, inquisitive wonder, and there is far from any unfriendliness to be met with; nor did they ever seem to dream that our coming could forebode them or their countryside ill.

In the cities it is far otherwise. There the literati, or rather the class of agitators, who are composed of men who have failed in the literary examinations, strong in their self-conceit, and fearing the loss of prestige and influence, which surely follows the advent of the European stranger, view the traveller with hatred and distrust, and stir up the people.

On our return we had to avail ourselves of the small gunboat, which was close by, to catch up our boat, which had gone ahead; and the five oarsmen, rowing with long oars attached by cane-lashings to uprights, some twelve inches above the gunwale of the boat,

propelled us at a great speed, enabling us soon to overtake the ho-tau.

In conversation with the men, one volunteered the suggestion to the tin-chai, that we had come to take away the "Po"; that unintelligible abstract quality meaning vulgarly "good fortune" more closely than anything else. We were not traders, we were not missionaries,—the only two classes of foreigners whom these people know,—and they could not credit the notion that we had come for pleasure and information, and were firmly persuaded that we were in Kwang-si, to spirit away the "Po" of the country. He would not accept our theory of being "poor learned men of the west," travelling in quest of knowledge, not because we were undeserving, in the humblest way, of the epithet of *savants*, but evidently because he looked on this *rôle* as a somewhat ingenious subterfuge! It was, in his opinion, a case of "painting a snake and adding legs," in other words, a gross piece of exaggeration!

Our attention was drawn to a quiet-looking man in the boat, who was said to have, some thirteen years ago, committed a murder in Kwang-tung, but, by the aid of powerful friends, to have made good his escape to Kwang-si, where, through influence, he obtained his present employment. If the story be true, he was "one of the mildest-mannered men that ever cut a throat," and looked as if he could not say "bo to a goose!" Criminals are said often to escape in this way, from one province to another, and, if they have influential friends, avoid justice altogether. It is

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astounding, with such a system of possible immunity from punishment, that crime is not more common.

Later in the day we passed a marriage procession moving along the river bank—an interesting spectacle. It was that of some young couple belonging to an aboriginal tribe, for the ceremony was not according to Chinese custom in several particulars. First came a troop of friends, who were well in front, then the band, titular flags and banners; next came the young bride in her sedan-chair; after her rode the husband, *not* the go-between, as sometimes happens in China, we were told; after him came the box containing the bridal dress, or wardrobe. Although the principal formalities are the same, local custom makes the carrying out of them differ considerably in the various provinces. Among the few unsubdued aboriginal tribes the customs vary greatly.

After meeting again a succession of gorges the country opened out, and the hills retired rapidly on either side. Here we passed on the south bank the unwalled town of Ko-hoa, a place which receives an unintelligible pre-eminence on European maps. It is a wretched, straggling place, of no consequence to-day, and with no past history, its sole distinction consisting in its being the seat of a magistracy.

In the evening we anchored a little above Shung-lam-hü, a market town on the north bank, with a somewhat prosperous air. Above this the character of the country, next the river, completely and suddenly altered. As if by magic, the jagged, black, rocky gorges and pinnacled

PART OF A CHINESE BRIDAL PROCESSION. (*To face p.* 190, Vol. I.)

ranges vanished, and gave place to a scene of cultivated beauty, which had the resemblance of a fairy scene. On the gently sloping and undulating banks, fields of wheat and Indian corn alternated with the red poppy, which we now saw for the first time, balanced on long slender stalks, in fields of beautiful green. Every inch was availed of for cultivation, literally down to the water-edge, and buffaloes were wearily dragging the rude native plough, within a few feet of the river.

The hills, which retire some distance on either side, are "rolling" or undulating in character, and coloured with a heather-like cover. The lower slopes, and the small, detached, hills skirting their bases, were ablaze with a beautiful purplish-pink blossom, called locally the "red flower firewood." Between the hills and the river rice cultivation, in plots, breaks up the level appearance of the ground, and there are numerous hamlets, enclosed in thick clusters of trees with beautiful foliage. The whole forms a joyous scene, which speaks of peace and prosperity, widely different from the rocky gorges and crumbly cities which we had left behind.

Parts of this portion of the river, with its waving fields, verdant vegetation, beautiful wooding and, here and there, what resembles a charming bit of lawn down to the water, might,—but for the buffaloes ploughing, a few peasants with their sun-hats, and a joss-house perched on a bend in the bank,—be a sunny bit of the Thames or Seine.

The poppy shoots out in January, and the harvest is gathered in May. It seems wonderful that it should

thrive here in the low plain level, and also in Yünnan, at heights which must be some five or six thousand feet above this. The poppy grown here and at Pe-sê, however, is said to yield an inferior quality to that of Yünnan, which is the narcotic generally in use. Foreign opium seems, practically, not to be known in these regions, and is certainly not used by the bulk of the people. According to the statements of the inhabitants here, Yünnan opium seems to have been consumed for two generations at least by the people of Kwang-si.

While here wishing to avoid any lengthy discussion of the opium question, the fact that the consumption of the native drug for so long a period has existed, and does still exist, to the exclusion of foreign opium, proves that the sweeping imputations made against the foreign trade in this article, so far as it concerns this part of Southern China, are not borne out by facts, and are convincingly disproved by our journey up the river.

It seems indisputable that, however desirable the abolition of the use of opium may be (and I have lived in a country—Burmah—where its injurious character has been illustrated in a marked and painful degree, now happily being remedied), the cessation of its production in India would mean no alteration in the present degree of consumption in inland Southern China, while for the rest of the Empire it cannot be doubted that Yünnan and other provinces would supply the increased demand. The foreign opium is preferred, on account of its stronger flavour and greater narcotic power, by those who can afford it; but should this not be procurable,

whether from its prohibitive cost or suppression of the trade, the native drug would take its place, without a shadow of a doubt. The use of the foreign drug is, I believe, merely a fashion. I think it most probable that the Government of India will, ere long, have to meet the difficulty of the loss of revenue derived from opium, on account of the Chinese using, in increased quantity, the native product, which is being greatly improved.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Photographing at halting-places — Amusement of boatmen — Eyes at the back of the head—"Monkey descent"—European restlessness —Chinese a fossil race — Loss of an old friend — Difficulties in photographing—Mile-stones along river—Length of distances vary with difficulties—Enthusiasm *minus* discretion—An upset—"Cæsar and his fortune" — Our brusque lieutenant — Classical study, the ladder to success — Effect of this — Sacredness of the antique — Cheapness of classical books.

DURING our mid-day halt for the men's *chow* (food), we mounted a small hill, close by the river, in order to spy the land, and, if possible, obtain a photograph, or, failing that, to make a sketch. Each halt of the boat gave us an opportunity of landing, of which we gladly availed ourselves, to stretch our limbs, and see what we could; and, if any rising ground was near, we executed a hasty ascent, with camera in hand.

Our boatmen were much amused at these proceedings, and, doubtless, looked upon this as the latest development of the eccentric madness and mischievous, insatiable curiosity which they were kind enough to attribute to us. All this was doubtless explained satisfactorily to themselves by their childlike belief in the Darwinian theory of descent, as applied to Europeans. Many strange and, absurd notions obtain credence with these simple, ignorant, and credulous people; amongst these is the

idea that foreigners' eyes are sometimes set in the back of the head, or vertically.

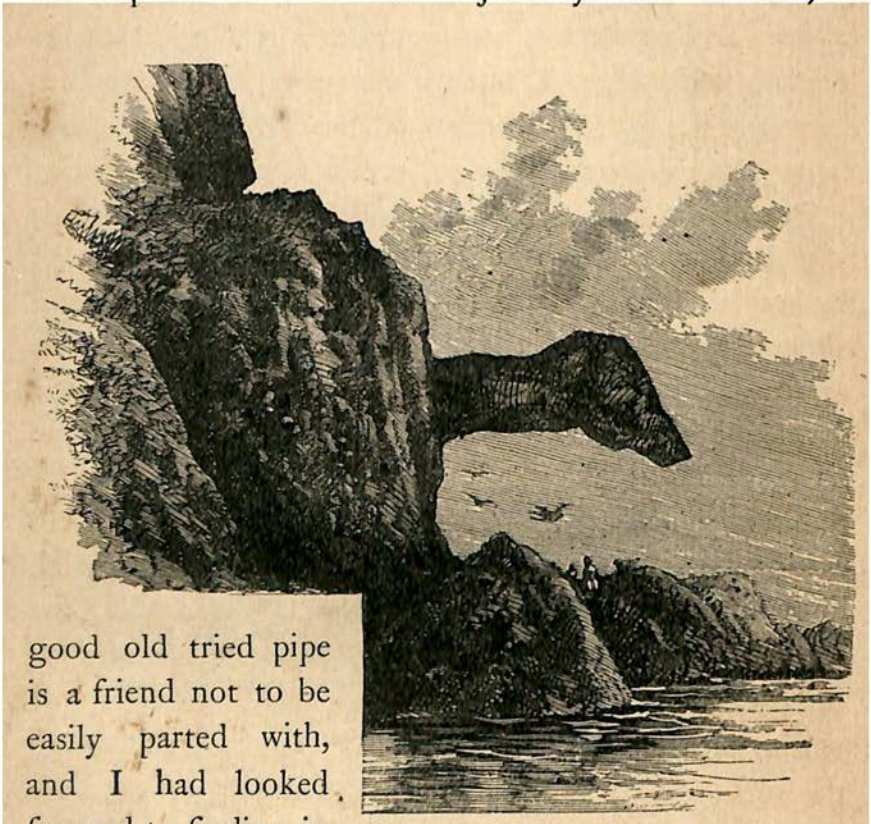
The impartial traveller, who may be able, if only in a slight degree, to make the attempt "to see ourselves as others see us," will recognise in our restless habits of inquiry and wandering ways, evidence of a mischievous spirit, according to Chinese judgment. Hence comes their not altogether unreasonable belief in this unflattering theory of "monkey descent."

But in the ridiculous and monstrous notions regarding foreigners which obtain credence by no means limited to the peasantry of remote provinces, one can recognise a small and trivial instance of the petrefaction of the Chinese race, which has not changed since the dawn of history. It has been well said:—"The Chinese race speaks, thinks, and feels to-day as it did three thousand years ago. The language, the system of writing, the laws and the rites, uniting to destroy all human spontaneity, have paralysed in its cradle this fossil race, which is senile, without having been anything else."

Having succeeded in gaining our post of vantage on the summit of a steep hill, a magnificent panorama rewarded us. The river, with its winding reaches, stretches through a beautiful champaign, with the dark, jagged ranges, which we had passed, some ten miles in the rear, and others far away on the horizon in front. We succeeded in getting two photographs, and had to hasten back, so as not to detain our crew.

We had no sooner reached our little vessel than the

boatmen, looking with little approval on any unnecessary delay, set off tracking with their usual hearty good-will. I discovered with no little regret, when too late, that I had left my favourite pipe on the top of the hill. On a journey such as ours, a good old tried pipe is a friend not to be easily parted with, and I had looked forward to finding in it solace in many a trying situation. In times of discomfort, disappointment or danger a pipe is an admirable companion.



DOG'S-NOSE ROCK.

If I had some reason to blame the beauty of the panorama witnessed from the hill for the loss of such a treasure—for it was in the interest excited by the opera-

tion of securing an impression of the prospect that I had laid it down—we had reason to be grateful to Nature, not only for its beauties, but also for being immovable! Any one who has undergone the wearisome and trying process of trying to photograph groups of a suspicious people such as the Chinese, or craft on the river, which move about with the most tantalising perversity, will understand how pleasant it is to meet with a subject, Dame Nature herself, who, though not without caprices of her own, did not on this occasion exert her ingenuity to avoid or escape the camera!

On the river bank, every now and then, we noticed brick pillars, which are called 10-li stones (the li being the statute Chinese mile). They are the demarcations for patrol outposts in these parts, which are close to a lately anarchy-stricken and still lawless borderland. The 10-li stages, or beats, are regulated by the same perversity which characterises the Chinese in so many ways, not least their estimate of distances, whose length seems to be here calculated on the basis of the amount of difficulty in getting from one place to another! These local 10-li stages vary in length and, as we found, in some places they are as much as 30 li in others. We took consolation from the thought that the elongation of the 10-li to 30 probably implied a certain amount of security in these parts. Perplexing as the subject is to the traveller, this was all we could gather on the subject.

In the afternoon my friend C. W., seeing some herons, of seemingly a strange description, had our

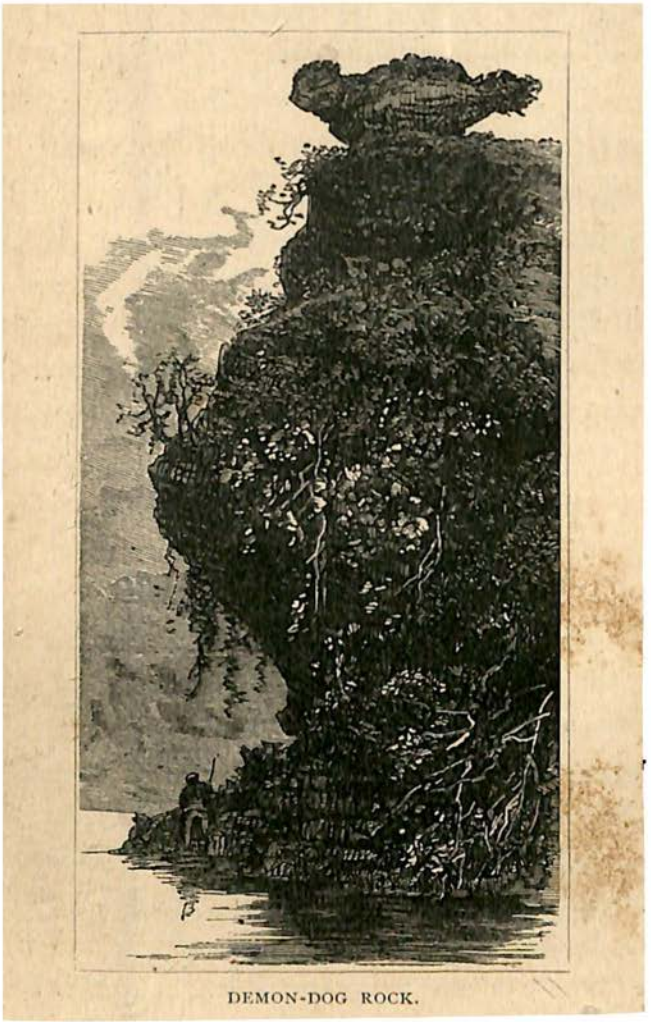
tiny canoe detached and took his gun with him. Our Chinese companion, with that enthusiasm which does not wait for judgment to temper it, wished to enter the canoe and, against the desire of my friend, jumped in,—at the moment of pushing off. The result was that the canoe was in a second nearly filled with water, and the *rencontre* might have taken a serious turn, being close to a rapid; but luckily, at the place where they were, the depth was only a few feet and no great harm could be done.

There was great excitement in the ho-tau; the old lieutenant, who saw everything, called on the trackers to halt, and to the small gunboat, which was being rowed, to hasten to the aid of my friends. A few minutes sufficed to enable the gunboat to effect a rescue, and bring them back little the worse, except for a wetting to themselves and their cartridges.

As our Chinese companion stepped, dripping, on board the boatmen greeted him slily, with a remark which was equivalent to—"Where is Cæsar and his fortune now?" This had reference to an incident of a few evenings before, when he was warned to be careful, on going ashore to take a stroll by moonlight, and had used the phrase jestingly: "What has Cæsar and his fortune to fear?"

The fore-steersman of our boat, who acted as lieutenant of the Chow-hing, with a hard and weather-beaten face, was the heart and soul of our vessel. Brimful of energy, with a keen eye ever on the rapids, the trackers, or the rocks, he was a man who would bear no interruption

with his duties. His brusque ways might well be pardoned, for his evident thoroughness and the interest he took in his work. When at the fore-oar helm, which



DEMON-DOG ROCK.

he handled for some eleven hours daily, he would not be spoken to, and pushed us aside without any ceremony, if we were in the way. He closely watched our

map-making, and knew all the bends and principal marks.

In this land of *laisser faire* and etiquette, it is pleasant to meet with a man who has some originality, and who is not bound down by the rigid laws of Chinese ceremony! In the west he would have carved his way to some better position than that of steersman, but in China there is no career open to such a man. In that country except through the official avenue, distinction, honour, dignities, or whatever goes to make up what is called in Europe a career, are not to be reached by the most ambitious or the most capable. Success depends on literary merit, tested by examination. The importance of this in its bearing on the character of the nation cannot be over-estimated. Out of the whole range, forming the stupendous mass of Chinese literature (which, as a monument of human toil has been, not inaptly, compared to their Great Wall, the one carrying no real useful instruction and the other no protection), classical knowledge alone is prized.

This is not to be wondered at; Government patronage, —which has, for obvious reasons, as its object, the discouragement of originality and keeping of the people in the same unchanging groove—finds an admirable instrument in a literary bureaucracy, impregnated with the classics, and a deep veneration for everything that is ancient.

As classical proficiency alone opens the gateway to the goal striven for by the scholar, he cannot be expected to pursue other branches of useful knowledge. The result

is, that the mass of the people is uneducated and ignorant. Bound firmly in the meshes of superstitious ignorance, there is no channel of escape for them.

From the same cause the only literati class, the officials, are eaten up with an imbecile conservatism, and priggish self-conceit, which has no parallel. There is no doubt that this is the result of their studies, as well as of their immovable traditions, which tend to repress everything in the shape of independent investigation in the pursuit of knowledge.

The insane doctrine of Confucius, that "everything ancient must be sacred," has done more than anything else to petrify the Chinese, and not only discourages originality but keeps them a fossil race! Chinese friends have told me that Mencius discouraged, by the spirit of his teachings, the doctrine that ancient things should not be changed. If he did so, his influence has been slight indeed. The classical literature is within the reach of all, as regards cost; and the four Confucian gospels and five canons of classical books, which, roughly speaking, represent the New and Old Testament, can be bought for a few hundred cash, or some three shillings, at any district town. We purchased a copy of Mencius later on for a few pence.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Lum-fong-hü—Ping-ma—The temple of "The Warrior King"—A deified general—The fox without a tail—Three blessings; wealth, sons, and whiskers—A last resource: turn showman—Likeness to a German village—A feat of strength—Young, fair, and *debonnaire*—Small feet, the ambition of all women—Beauty in full bloom—Walking on the heels—Tight-lacing and high heels—Taken for missionaries—Aboriginal chiefs—Ploughing—Water oxen—Flute-playing herd-boys—Fishermen's caves—Shallowness of river—"Hundred-peak" village.

HAVING passed several unimportant villages, and the small market town of Lum-fong-hü, on the south bank, we anchored for the night, some eight miles beyond, at Ping-ma. The town is built along a sweeping curve of the river, on a high, steep clay bank, on the north side. It is situated in an amphitheatre of hills, the whole plain being, to the water-edge, under close verdant cultivation. The shore opposite shelves gently, and is thickly wooded. The town itself has a new and clean, though unpicturesque appearance.

We visited it in the afternoon, and strolled through its main streets to the principal temple at the back, an ordinary looking structure, erected to some deified hero, whose spirit is here worshipped after the usual fashion. It is erected to Wu-ti, "the Warrior King."

This deity was a general named Kuan-ch'ang, who is famous in Chinese history, for the part he played in the

war of the Three States. His spirit, along with that of Confucius, is most commonly adored, the one representing the civil and the other the military worship. In several places, on our way, we have found them religiously honoured in the same temple.

GOD OF WAR.

In the main building, at the back of the court, was the usual shrine, looking mean and uncared-for, and on either side, left and right, were two huge highly ornamented figures, rudely carved and gaudily coloured, representing the civil and military element in the shape of the general's private secretary and aide-de-camp. The latter was dark as an Ethiopian and had a patriarchal beard.

The Chinese are never tired of ridiculing the beards of foreigners, but in reality they have the greatest veneration for hirsute appendages, as may be seen from the pictures and statues of celebrated men, nearly every one of whom is endowed with a beard, which he probably never possessed. In the historical plays their famous characters are always bearded, and the stroking and management of the beard forms an important item of the actors' bye-play. Again, the attention given by old men to combing the few straggling hairs which may give them any pretension to a beard, are proofs of the

regard in which they hold them. Finally, the Chinese phrase has it "San-pu-ch'iu;" there are three things not to be sought for or obtained, which are said to be,—whiskers, a son, and wealth. The Chinese proverb says that one cannot have all these three *tzu*.

At the doorway, on either side, stood the usual figures,—one, the groom, holding the general's horse ready saddled; the other, the henchman, with his suit of armour and weapons. Such grotesque, fantastic figures! They recalled some rude daub of the feudal times.

We were accompanied by an immense rabble of urchins, who never transgressed, however, beyond the bounds of childish mischief. These were recruited, from time to time, by young men, until we must have had a great portion of the youth of Ping-ma at our heels. They must have been sadly disappointed not to see us in our European costume, on which they had doubtless counted, for a large concourse had assembled on the bank, having heard of our coming. We treated them badly, in their opinion, for in donning the Chinese dress we had robbed the show of its main charm. On such occasions the dress undoubtedly makes the man. The curiosity was so great, that I suggested to our Chinese companion that, should our finances run short, we should exhibit ourselves at a few cash per head, and I feel certain that we should have proved a great success.

The main street was paved in the centre with large, uneven slabs, recalling the roadway of many a German village, as also did the irregular building of the town, the low-eaved houses, and the open squares throughout

the place. A few shops, a restaurant or two, and some few streets of substantially built houses, completed this agricultural town, which showed few signs of commerce.

The elders loitering about were pleasant and loquacious enough, when we addressed them. One of them pointed out a huge, rectangular stone with a handle, which was said to be used for feats of strength by the youth of the town, when they gathered together in the evenings. Judging by the weight of the stone, which my friend could not move, and from the absence of all sports in China, I should say that the stone was not often whirled about, as our informant seemed to wish us to understand was the case.

A favourite subject in Chinese plays and pictures is that of one of their historical heroes, who, as a boy, not content with ordinary stone weights, such as I have described, seizes two of the immense stone lions, which may be seen at the entrances of many high official residences, and amuses himself with raising these, as we do dumb-bells.

As we returned, the women were gathered at their doorsteps, and we remarked, at the portal of some local petty mandarin, which we had passed before, a number of his womankind, collected to gain a sight of the strangers. Amongst them was a young lady, whose feet we should have liked to examine, to discover whether they were "golden lilies," as the monstrosity of compressed feet is euphonistically termed. Her attire and air bespoke a certain *cachet* of cultivation, not common to these plain, agricultural people.

An impression obtains that the small feet are the prerogative of the daughters of the higher classes only; but this is an entire mistake, for, as no respectable man of the higher class (say the sons of a "blue button" official) would dream of marrying any woman without them, they are the ambition of every woman. A number of the poor, especially the large class who make their living on the water in boats, are precluded from binding them up, by their work and by necessity.

A Chinese belle is described as having cheeks like the almond-flower, lips like a peach-blossom, a waist like the willow-leaf, eyes bright as the ripples dancing in the sun, and footsteps like the lotus-flower! As the gait of the victims to Dame Fashion has the appearance of any ordinary footed mortal walking entirely on the heels, the simile proves that the Chinese have a certain perverted turn of invention. In comparison with western customs it is less injurious than tight-lacing, and not much more ludicrous than the wearing of high heels in the centre of the foot, so common among fine ladies who wish to be what they, by a strange travesty of terms, call *bien chaussées.*

Next the mandarin's house was tethered a handsome pony, close on 13 hands high, the counterpart of many a Shan pony which I had owned in Burmah. This animal had been bought at one of the local cattle fairs, bred of a stock which comes from the Laos or Shan country, of which we saw specimens later on in our journey after we left Yünnan.

On our return to the boat, a large crowd collected

and remained outside our ho-tau on the sides of the bank. Mr. Hong-beng-kaw was sitting outside, book in hand. Somehow or other, the impression had spread that we were missionaries, who are regarded in this region with far from friendly feelings, as explained earlier in my narrative. We had some difficulty in disabusing them of the idea, but it was only on seeing C. W. engaged bandaging the foot of one of the boatmen that they were convinced. This little incident, this touch of nature, showing that we practised the mission of humanity, if we did not preach any doctrine, won their hearts and they became quite friendly.

The country above Ping-ma remained the same in character, only more open, with lower banks, and the river greatly broader, often a quarter of a mile wide, and in a few places much more. Ping-ma is said to be increasing, there being now some five hundred houses in the town, and a city wall is about to be built, when it will doubtless be created a hsien or yuen (the latter being a Cantonese term), namely, a town of the fourth order.

Until three-and-a-half years ago this place was the head-quarters of a T'u-ssŭ, or aboriginal chief, who had a certain number of villages under his jurisdiction, each village having a headman, who was responsible to the T'u-ssŭ, who in turn made his reports to the mandarin in charge of the district. The term T'u-ssŭ means literally "native functionary," but it is applied by the Chinese not only to the aboriginal chiefs, but also to the districts under them. These chiefs, who are hereditary,

receive no fixed salary from Government, the title being more an honorary one than anything else; but they are allowed a certain small percentage on the taxes collected by them.

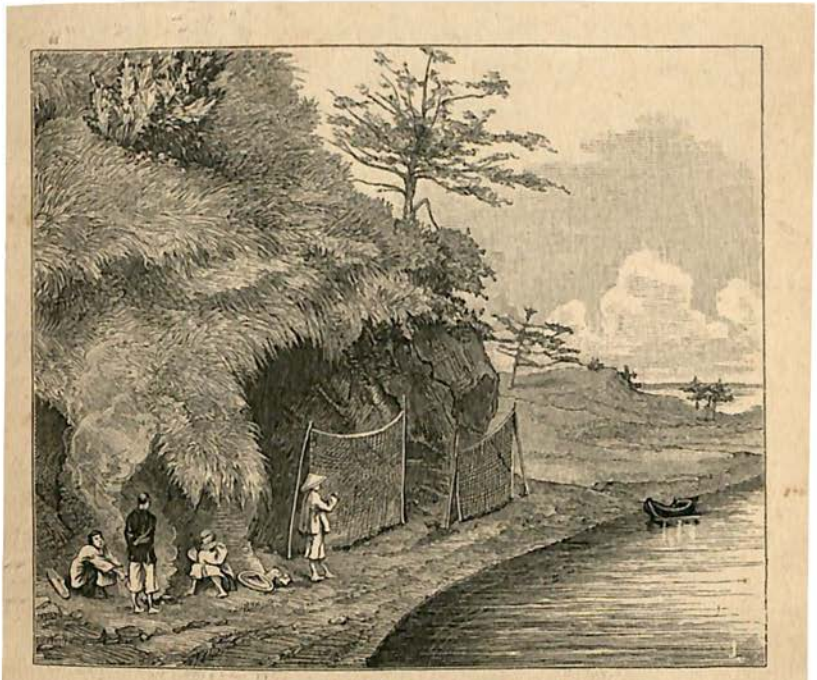
They are usually men of substance, and are not in actual want of pay; their influence is said to be very great in the districts under their charge. Considerable presents are given to them by the people, and they are held in great esteem and veneration.

The peasants were busy at an early hour, ploughing along the banks with buffaloes, or "water-oxen," as the Chinese call them. Many of them were very white in colour, but not so large as those seen in India or Burmah. They are reported to be remarkably docile, and in this respect differ from the Burmah animal.

The herd boys were seen riding, while driving their charges, just as may be witnessed in so many Chinese stucco frescoes. It is a common subject of art, and indeed a picture or description of rural scenery without this metaphor,—the boy invariably blowing a flute, which we, however, had not once noticed,—would be incomplete. No doubt the flute is a poetical necessity, and we were terribly wanting in artistic spirit to notice the trifle.

An ascent which we made gave us a magnificent view, and C. W. an opportunity of taking a couple of photographs; after which we hurried down, and my companion made a rapid visit to the other bank, to secure a picture of some fishermen's caves, where they live during the day in the intervals of their labour.

The nets hanging along the shore, half-a-dozen fishing canoes moored to the bank, and the fine stalactites suspended from the cliff, were decidedly picturesque; but the central figure, which would have given human interest to the scene, in the shape of a group of fisher-people, men, women and children, clad in the most



FISHERMAN'S CAVE, NEAR PE-SÊ.

artistic disorder, vanished as my friend placed in position that suspicious instrument, the camera.

Nearly parallel to the river, and some eight or ten miles off, on the right bank, runs a very serrated range of hills, and between it and the river again are rounded knolls, the whole country being highly cultivated, with hamlets and farms, dotted here and there. Poppy,

tobacco, sugar-cane, wheat and Indian corn, are the chief crops.

The river, in places, broadens out, with sandy shoals and banks, forming serious obstacles in the channel, which at these places becomes very shallow, often as little as three feet, at the deepest. Indeed one could, in places, wade across the stream. We anchored late, dusk having overtaken us a couple of miles above Na-pan, which lies on the southern bank. It is a small agricultural village, opposite to which is Pak-yuk, "Hundred Peak Village," so called from the pinnacled range facing it on the other side. Allowing for the usual Chinese exaggeration, the village is not unjustly named.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The Miao-tzŭs — Unsubdued, and subdued — Position of Tu-yang doubtful—French position of Taiping Fu and Lung-chau Fu wrong —The Nam-ho or South river—Incorrectness of Chinese maps— The "cut-off regions"—Aboriginal festival—"Throwing the ball" —Fairings—Chinese St. Valentine's day—The father's vow—Acres for charms—Tien-chau—Fung-i-chau—The Ting-lo and Tung-lan tribes — Fung Island — Nga-pan rapid — Joss-houses — Temples as hostelries—The almighty dollar—Inferiority of Chinese temples— A Chinese devil-god—Number of religious buildings—Bridges— Fung-i—Local soldiery—Fisher cabins.

IN addition to, and quite apart from the Miao-tzŭs, who are found in the north-west of this province, some ten days' march north of Pe-sê (our destination), as well as in Eastern Yünnan and Kwei-chau, there are said to be twenty-four Chau districts (that is, districts under a Chau, or town of the third order), occupied by these partially subdued tribes throughout Kwang-si.

Although the names of their chiefs are given in the Chinese "Red-book," the nearest equivalent to which would be a combination of our Army and Civil Lists, and their position is marked, though inaccurately, on the statistical Chinese maps, no information of any value is given regarding the customs, language, or numbers of these tribes.

The Miao-tzŭ, of Kwang-si, at least those who inhabit a very mountainous territory near Nati-chou, on the

north (main branch) of the West river, are unsubdued, and are called Shêng Miao-tzŭ. The name has generally been accepted as meaning "children of the soil," which they undoubtedly are; but the rendering has never, I believe, been accredited as a wholly satisfactory explanation. They are divided into Săng and Shuh, that is, raw and unsubdued, and ripe or subdued.

Little is known regarding them or their language, which, however, is essentially different from Chinese. We hoped to see something of these people near Kwang-nan-fu, in Yünnan, but saw only the subdued tribe.

Of the subdued aboriginal tribes in this province, there are some dozen in the extreme west corner of Kwang-si, through which we were passing, and of these several are situated not remote from the river. The first of these tribes passed after Nan-ning-fu is close to the town of Lung-ngan, to which we paid a visit. We could there learn nothing of the tribe which is called Tu-yang T'u-ssŭ, from the name of their chief town Tu-yang; and of this place, which is shown on the French maps as close to the river, above Lung-ngan, we could find no trace at the place marked.

The Chinese map, which we had, showed it situated halfway between Lung-ngan and Tien, some forty miles further up the river, close to the north bank; but, though we paid special attention to inquiries, with the view of ascertaining its position, we could learn nothing of it there, and believed the Chinese authority to be in error. It may lie somewhere in the vicinity of Lung-ngan.

A discovery of considerable geographical importance was made by us, in finding that the cities of Taiping-fu and Lung-chau-fu, which are shown in the French maps as situated on the An-nan Chiang, or Ngan-nan river, flowing into the Tonquin Gulf, are in no way connected, by water communication, with the West river; they are in reality on a branch of the West river, which bifurcates some twenty-five miles above Nan-ning, as before described.

This stream, called locally the Nam-ho (South river), is little less than the West river itself in size, being 200 yards wide, though, judging by the current, of considerably less volume. Its name is doubtless owing to the branching of the stream, one arm being called the North, and the other the South river. The local nomenclature of the waterways is most confusing, varies very much as the *li* does, and with about as much reason!

The degree of reliance to be placed on our Chinese map may be gauged from the fact that a famous iron column erected to the memory of Chu-ko-liang, a celebrated Chinese war-councillor and remarkable man, at a place called Chao-chou, which is near Tali-fu, is placed by the Chinese authority in the south-east of Yünnan, near the sea, while as the crow flies it is in reality some five hundred miles off the nearest coast-line! If the local topography is at fault, the foreign information is given with more than an impartial degree of inaccuracy, the European countries, huddled up into a corner with other "cut-off" regions, being placed cheek by jowl with Ili!

Of the Tu-yang tribe we unfortunately saw nothing, as we were unable to afford the time required to pay them a visit, although much inclined to do so. We heard accounts of these people which led us to believe that a visit, especially at New Year time, would well repay one. The most curious of their customs seems to be a ceremony which takes place annually, on the first three days of the new year, and which is called Hoi-gnam; a plausible local explanation of this name I refrain from giving, it being hardly suited to the polite pen.

It is the custom of the people of the tribe to assêmble for these three days on two sides of a small valley, the sexes being divided, the gentlemen on one side and the ladies on the other. Songs and feasting take place. Love-songs are improvised and sung by those swains, who wish to win the heart of some particular damsel. If the lady respond to the aboriginal troubadour, she throws him a coloured ball, which he catches, and he is then bound to take the charmer to the fair, which is being held close by, and purchase her whatever she may desire. The purchases in such cases usually involve an outlay of some seven to twelve taels, according to the circumstances of the gentleman. For the remainder of the three days he is bound to act as her squire, and during this time her will is law. After this, all return to their avocations as before. It is a sort of singing St. Valentine's Day! Messer Marco would have called the Tu-yang T'u-ssŭ "a fine country for young fellows to go to!"

In some particulars the incident of the ball resembles a Chinese custom once in vogue, and which is believed by many still occasionally to occur. A father, whose daughter may be sick, or suffering from some ailment, sometimes vows to hand her over to the first man who picks up a reel of silk, which she shall throw from her on a certain day. The young lady is placed in some prominent position; news of the ceremony having been widely given, she casts the ball amongst the crowd which has gathered. Whoever seizes the silken thread, be he peasant or peer, coolie or mandarin, obtains the lady! It might be imagined that a young lady, sick unto death, might not prove an inducement to draw a throng of suitors; but it must be remembered that the parent in such cases is invariably wealthy. In China under these circumstances beauty, even in failing health, can draw them, if not with a hair, at least with a ball of silk!

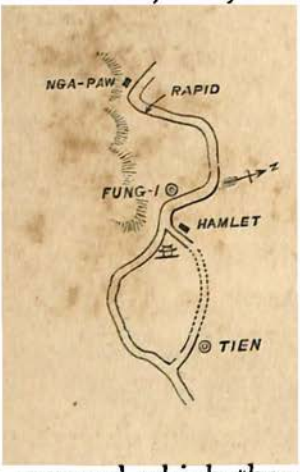
Passing through a highly cultivated plain of sandy soil on a substratum of clay, we came to Tien-chau, a large town of the third order, lying a mile off the river, on a stream called the Ssŭ-ho, which debouches on the north bank; and some three miles further, arrived at Fung-i-chau, some short distance from Tien. To the north-east is a tribe called the Ting-los.

To the north, near the head waters of the Ssŭ-ho, is the Tung-lan tribe, with a chau city of the same name lying on the eastern left bank, some four and a half days' journey distant by the river, which is navigable by small boats. The stream, although of considerable

capacity (being about 400 feet broad by 50 feet deep in section), is shallow.

A large island, reaching to Fung-i, is formed by a branch of the Ssŭ-ho, which joins the main river again just below Fung-i on the north side; while on the south the high serrated range, with low, rolling hills in front, closes in on the river.

The stream soon after turns away in a northerly direction, and, after a bend, returns to the range some five miles farther on at the Nga-paw rapid, and within a few hundred yards of the village bearing the same name.



In the apex of the bifurcation of the river below Fung-i, and facing a hamlet which is a suburb of the town on the opposite side of this stream, stands a fine group of joss-houses or temples, presenting no remarkable points except the extent of ground which they cover, which is greater than most we had noticed on our way up the West river.

These temples are always more commodious and extensive than the number of bonzes, or throng of worshippers, would warrant. They serve as resting-places or hostelries, where food and drink, however, are not provided for travellers of all degree.

Temples, in their character of caravanserais, derive no small portion of their income from travellers. On occasion, the bonzes serve out tea to the wayfarer visiting the sacred edifice, but it is usually tea, in which

only the most sensitive palate can, with perseverance, detect any symptom of flavour, such as we tasted at the Fu-po temple. Commonly, I fear, an invidious distinction is made in favour of the traveller with the purse, who is, with considerable pomp and circumstance, offered the subscription-book, in which usage compels him to enter an amount, often disproportionate to his income! The "flowered border," vulgarly known as the dollar, enters into every transaction in the "Flowery Land," and is here, in a greater degree than in other countries, where its power is not inconsiderable, indeed almighty.

Close by the cluster of temples, which are half-hidden and pleasantly sheltered from the sun's rays by numerous beautiful trees, on the north side, was situated a joss-house recently erected, which some distance off attracted our attention from its really handsome ornamentation and a certain taste in design. In these respects it is deserving of notice, differing widely from the many similar structures, hitherto seen by us. These temples, with the guild and assembly halls and yamens, form almost the only public edifices in Chinese cities, but present few architectural features distinctive from other buildings. They are not to be compared to the Buddhist temples of Burmah or Laos, and are altogether wanting in that imposing majesty and sublime grandeur which the sacred edifices of the latter countries possess.

Chinese temples are composed of a series of cloisters surrounding the courts, within each of which is a temple or hall, connected by terraces or galleries; there is a want of altitude, an absence of aspiring boldness and

unity, which, notwithstanding their extent, leaves a generally bald and tame impression on the mind. They look mean after the noble sanctuaries of Indo-China.

The joss-house, to which I have alluded, was, however, undoubtedly a handsome structure of its kind, raised in three tiers of excellent grey-coloured brickwork, the base and upper story being square, and the intermediate one hexagonal. This arrangement, one which we had not seen before, is effective, and the brilliant colouring and handsome ornamentation, especially of the roofing and upturned corners of the eaves, make it a structure which the town might well be proud of.

GOD OF LITERATURE.

We glanced inside, and found on the ground-floor some half-dozen images of the usual gaudy and rude description. On the second tier stood a single image, placed in a shrine, resembling strongly, in his dark skin, malevolent expression of countenance, threatening attitude, and a certain peculiar arrangement of flowing skirts behind, a certain old gentleman who shall be nameless. This figure had a horn on either side of the head; and what looked like a weapon of some sort, but was really a Chinese pen, uplifted in his right hand.

This formidable figure turned out to be what may be

described as the Chinese god of the star of literature. The horns recalled those given by Michael Angelo to Moses, and those commonly given to the river gods in ancient mythology. Lessing has written largely on the subject; but I am not aware whether any elucidation of the Chinese horns just mentioned has been made.

GOD OF THUNDER.

And here, now that we are near the end of our water journey on the West river, I would draw attention to the vast number of religious edifices met with along this river. Each village, indeed almost every hamlet, has its group of joss-houses, nearly always of a size and appearance beyond what one would expect in this poor country, and the number of pagodas noted by us, on our survey along the banks of the river, between Wu-chau and Pe-sê, a distance of some five hundred miles, is remarkable.

It has been remarked by Mr. Baber that a pagoda in course of construction is a singular sight in China. We had not actually witnessed them in construction, but we had seen three which had been completed within the last twelvemonths. They were all substantially built of grey brick, and might be termed handsome structures of their kind.

A people which can afford so numerous and so costly sacred edifices — for their cost is notorious — cannot be altogether wanting in the religious side to their

character, as is so commonly charged against them; moreover, it proves a certain degree of affluence, or an absence of poverty, which all other appearances would not lead one to expect.

Judged by this standard, the town of Fung-i cannot be without some measure of affluence, with its massive and gaunt pawn-shop standing out, a marked object facing the river, and the Canton Guildhall, a handsome building on the opposite shore, two sure evidences of prosperity. Yet the appearance of the town, a low, straggling place, with its ruined wall and mud houses, would not give one the impression of anything but poverty.

From time to time we had seen a certain number of streams, though none of the larger, which debouch into the river, bridged by substantial stonework. Nearly each village and town had its flight, or several flights, of steps, as at Fung-i, lining the bank. Fung-i is not an interesting place, the only thing remarkable, besides the pawn-shop, being the gaudy red Confucian temple, a hideous structure, standing at the lower end of the town. There were no signs of life, except a few fishermen's canoes. Here and there a few "village braves," who were better clad than the ragged soldiery usually are, were seen. The men belonged to the provincial force, and did not form part of the regular "bannered" army. There was a small garrison of these local soldiery here.

If not remarkable for courage, they at least have the word "brave" written across the chest, a literary conceit

which is not likely to strike terror into the heart of any enemy. The mud city wall at its corners has a brick buttress without which the work, a wretched affair of the class called *cutcha** in India, would probably not remain one day in position.

A short distance beyond the town we came upon some half-dozen grass cabins, or huts, along the slope of the bank, the residences of Chung-koo fisherpeople who settle here at certain seasons of the year.

These cabins were indescribably wretched looking; the roof consisted of a few sticks and branches placed together, covered with grass, in the position of a curve, with a doorway some three feet in height and two in breadth. The floor was that made by nature, a rocky soil, covered with a handful of grass and sedge—terrible habitations for human beings at this season of the year, when heavy rain is by no means uncommon.

* Sun-dried bricks, laid in mud.

CHAPTER XXX.

Peaked crags—Overland routes to the Tonquin Gulf—Routes to Yünnan —Routes from Annam to S.W. of Kwang-si—Armed traders—Advice to travellers—Suaviter in modo—Lawlessness along the Red river—French survey—Poppy cultivation—Cave-dwellings—Different people and customs—"Barbarians"—Man-tzŭ and Pen-ti-jen—Kingdom of Manzi—Savage Man-tzŭs and Miao-tzus of Ssŭ-ch'uan.

CLOSE on half-past seven in the evening, so late that the last few angles of our survey had to be taken almost in the dark, we reached a hamlet, five miles beyond Nga-paw, which lies close beyond the furious rapids of the same name. This village is romantically situated at the foot of wild and angry-looking peaked crags, the hills forming a buttress which turns the river with force to tear its way over the rapids below. From Nga-paw to Chen-an-fu (the Tchin-ngan of most maps), which lies three-and-a-half days' land journey to the north-west, there is a rough road track. Some trade of the most petty description, as may be imagined, finds its way through Chen-an and this place to the surrounding neighbourhood.

Before leaving Nga-paw, the last place on the West river which has any communication *overland* with the various ports along the Tonquin Gulf, a few words may be devoted to the subject of present trade-routes existing in these regions.

The information which few words will convey, meagre as it is, cost me much inquiry, extending over a long period. It was made both by written communication with Canton and Pak-hoi, when I was in England; and personally when in Canton and Hong-kong, before I started on my journey. Of course inquiries have been constantly afoot since we left Canton. For the most useful portion of my data I am indebted to Mr. Cameron, of the China Inland Mission, whose kindness in this matter, to an utter stranger, will be held by me in grateful memory. Mr. Cameron, some years ago, travelled from Pak-hoi to Nan-ning and thence to Yünnan-fu.

Between the West river and Pak-hoi there may be said to exist only *one* trade-route, a land journey of five days, which has already been described lower down the river. The route diverges close to the river to two places, from either of which it takes four or five days by boat to Nan-ning-fu.

From that place Yünnan can be entered, either by the main stream through Pe-sê (our present route), or by the Nam-ho (South river), also called Tso-kiang (Left river), the nearest town to the border being Hsia-lung-chou, from which place a land journey of nine days takes one into Yünnan. As Pe-sê, however, is situated on infinitely better water communication, and lies on the borders of Yünnan, the Pe-sê route naturally takes all such trade as exists, and is the one always adopted by mandarins and traders.

From Hâi-phong and Ha-noi, both ports situated on

the Tonquin Gulf and in Annamese territory, Annamese traders find their way to Tai-ping-fu and other cities in the south-west of Kwang-si. One of the routes is *viâ* Chen-an and Nga-paw, which has been already mentioned. This latter, a petty hawkers' trade-route, hardly deserves to be named, except from some little interest which must attach to the fact that *any* does exist in these lawless parts, especially when one considers the difficulties and insecurity, the long land carriage and necessary trans-shipment of goods. These traders always have an armed body-guard, and carry pistols, guns, and spears. But this is the case everywhere in these regions. Our men carried, as already mentioned, a huge battery.

A few words may here be tendered to the future traveller in these regions. In Kwang-si, and even in Kwang-tung, he must expect, in the large cities and larger towns, to have inquisitive crowds, not too well-behaved, constantly at his heels; and in cases to be scowled upon and possibly insulted. Probably he will receive a shower of stones or mud. We escaped this, because we avoided the cities.

The traveller who cannot act with prudence and judgment, who cannot throw himself into sympathy with the people and make due allowances for any ill-behaviour, and more especially the traveller *who cannot keep his temper*, had better not venture into the Two Kwangs.

The more I saw of the country, the more I felt that the traveller would be better without firearms. If carried, however, their use should never be threatened, except in

dire necessity, and then of course used. But I believe firearms to be quite useless, and only a source of danger, amongst an excitable and semi-hostile people.

Regarding the Red river route, from the Tonquin coast to the extreme south-east corner of Yünnan, it is not necessary to say much here. The river is reported to be in a very lawless state for a considerable portion of its length, namely, on the upper part between Man-hao, claimed by the French to be the highest navigable point for trading boats of any size, and Ha-noi.

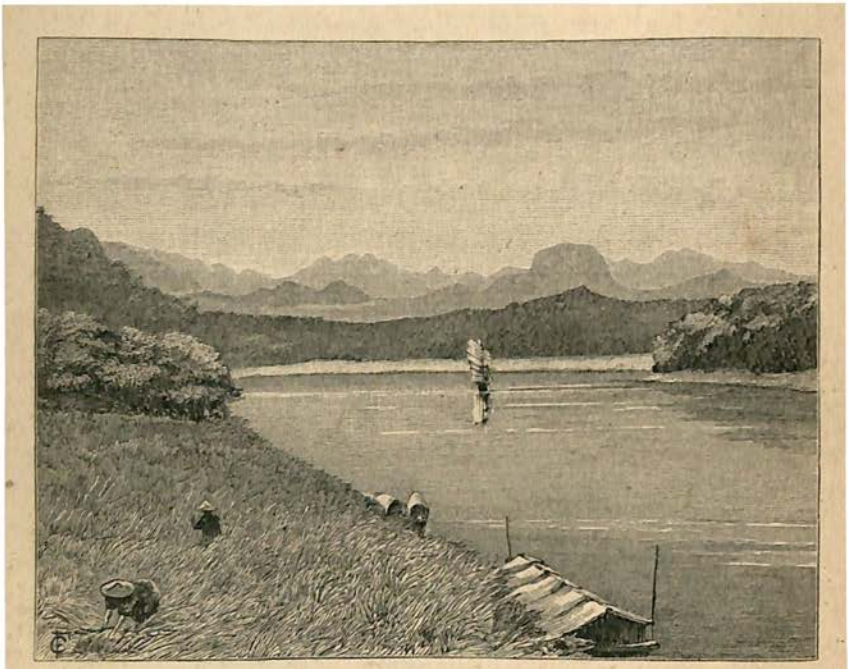
The French were understood to have an expedition of survey or exploration, in connection with a Commission for the suppression of piracy on that river, either actually in course of execution or about to be put in hand when we went up the stream. This movement on their part is not received without feelings of suspicion and dislike by the Chinese, who are most unlikely to view with indifference the supremacy of the French power on the waters of the Red river, no matter under what euphonious nomenclature their action may be disguised.

About Nga-paw the country still remains cultivated on either side of the stream, but thickly interspersed with knolls which approach the river more closely. The high serrated range noticed before again recedes from the bank, while a small range approaches the river on the north side for a short space, and then again retires.

The crops seemed much poorer hereabouts, and poppy and tobacco, which lower down were so plentiful, were now not frequent. The fields of red and

purple poppy flowers standing, raised on their long, slender, and waving stalks above the masses of green leaves, gave a gay look to the cultivation. Near Nga-paw we saw immense areas of this crop on the sandy flats.

In several places we saw small cave-dwellings, in the

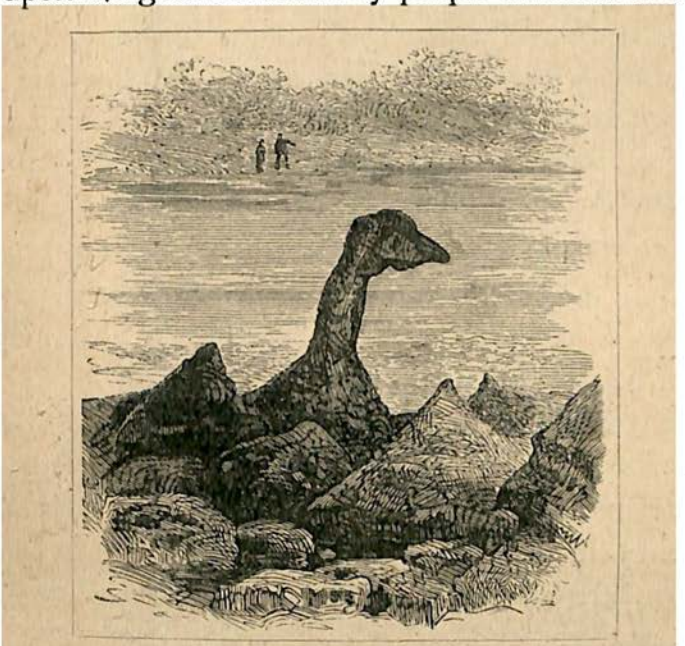


VIEW ON THE SI-KIANG, NEAR PE-SÊ.

sides of soft, reddish-coloured sandstone formation. One was previously casually noticed by me, on the occasion when we brought firewood from an old peasant on the bank who lived in it. Those we had since noticed seemed to be merely used as casual dwellings for fishermen, as there were no signs of permanent habitation. They are natural and not in any way artificial, though

the soft nature of the bluffs or knolls would lend itself readily to excavation. Von Richthofen has drawn attention to the cave dwellings largely used in Shansi in Northern China. These are made in the *löss* formation, common to that part of the Empire.

We now daily received evidences that we were entering upon a region inhabited by people different in many



SWAN-NECK ROCK.

ways from the Chinese proper, if the Chinese of Kwang-si and Kwang-tung may be so called. But these, as I have before indicated, are looked upon as barbarians of a sort by the more cultivated classes of Northern China. These provinces, countries in themselves, went by the name of "the Two kingdoms of Yueh," until conquered and brought under the Imperial

rule about two centuries ago. Marco Polo, I believe, makes no mention of them, showing that they must in his time have been considered barbarians.

We had from time to time seen traces of the Chong-koos. The wedding procession which we encountered; the complete change in the dialect, even among the Chinese of the province; the stories of aboriginal tribes; the strange ceremony of the Tu-yang T'u-ssŭ, and lastly, a most lucky *rencontre* which we had one morning, as described in the next chapter, all pointed to the great change which was taking place. We daily received evidences, small though they were as links taken separately, which together formed a chain, proving that the inhabitants of the region we were passing through differed in many points from the Chinese whom we left behind in Kwang-tung.

Along the sides of this waterway many of the inhabitants are of pure Kwang-tung origin, especially the traders; but in many cases these people have intermarried with the aboriginal people of the country. The consequence is a mixed race, which has adopted the dress, manners, and, so far as they could, the language of the Cantonese Chinese.

In the latter respect the difference is merely one of dialect;—wide indeed, it is true, but still only a change of dialect,—which alters, as has been noticed already, almost with every district.

The aboriginal tribes are looked down upon by the inhabitants of the river side as barbarians, in this part under the generic names of Miao-tzŭ and Man-tzŭ.

These, with other names of the same description, are used contemptuously by the Chinese proper, when reference is made to aboriginal tribes.

The term Man-tzŭ is said to mean "sons of barbarians," but its derivation seems doubtful and, according to competent authority, is said to be devoid of significance. The term Pen-ti-jen ("natives of the country") is also commonly used by the Chinese, and mixed races along this river, in the contemptuous sense of "savage," towards the aborigines. Yet these inhabitants of the river banks are themselves despised, as Man-tzŭ or Pen-ti-jen, by the people of Eastern Kwang-tung; and these again are termed "savages" to this day, by the people of the more northern provinces. It will thus be seen that the term, be its origin what it may, is used in the sense of "savage" or "barbarian," and that there are several gradations of this interesting genus in Southern China alone! Probably much the same system is observed in using these contemptuous expressions in other parts of China. The fact is that the term is applied by each section of the Chinese race towards others, to whom civilisation has come at a later date.

"The Two Kwangs," as the provinces of Kwang-tung and Kwang-si are called to-day by the Chinese, formed a portion of the kingdom of Manzi, which received a large share of attention from Marco Polo. Manzi, in his time, was the name applied to Southern China, in contradistinction to Cathay proper. In Colonel Yule's notes to the Venetian's narrative, reference is made to the subject, and Manzi is explained

as having been the name applied to the territory under the Sung dynasty, when the Mongols conquered Cathay.

It is curious and interesting to find that the term Man-tzŭ is still occasionally employed in a contemptuous sense by the Chinese of the north to their southern countrymen. The term Man-tzŭ now, however, is commonly used to denote an aboriginal race, inhabiting the mountainous portions of the south of Ssŭ-ch'uan, on the borders of the Yang-tze-kiang. They have been, and are still, a source of constant trouble to the Chinese authorities, along with the unsubdued tribes of Miao-tzŭs, and seem, in some considerable degree, to merit the term "savage."

CHAPTER XXXI.

Cavaliers—Ploughing—Chong-koos — Inaccurate information — Fishing with cormorants — Kuei-chau T'u-ssŭ—Nature's gentlemen—Light hair—My artless friend—Trained birds—Our ignorance despised—Turtles — Attacking a rapid — A dead child—Heartless jesting—Infanticide—A visit—Disease at Pe-sê from bad water—Unhealthy repute of Man-hao and Pe-sê—Effect of sudden change—Sandstone bluffs—Pak-quat—Nga-wan—A Taiping fort—Large bricks—Pon-tsün rapid—Shan baskets — Method of poling—Maniacal yells—Grass for the pigs—The Nam-kok T'ing.

PONIES were now frequently observed, and groups of horsemen, with gay trappings, were met on the river bank. Oxen were seen ploughing in the fields. The Chong-koos of this province, of whom we saw several at the pottery work, were common. We had now entered upon new and more interesting ground.

Turning a bend in the river we came upon a party of men, some thirty in number, who at once attracted our attention. On inquiring of our boatmen we were told they were Chong-koos, but their appearance, as far as we could judge from our boat, belied the information. This, coupled with our experience of the fertile invention of the Chinese in giving information, determined us to stop the boat and pay them a visit. A couple of minutes sufficed to jump into the canoe, with the camera in concealment, and take us to the bank where they were gathered together. Close by stood some bamboo

frames on which a number of large birds were perched, while some thirty canoes of a primitive sort were hauled up on the bank.

On landing we were delighted to find we had hit upon a party of fishermen, belonging to an aboriginal tribe coming from the neighbourhood of Kuei-chau, in the south-eastern corner of Yünnan. Regarding their exact *habitat* we could elicit nothing, though they were communicative and talkative enough, beyond that their district was called Kuei-chau T'u-ssŭ, or the aboriginal district of Kuei-chau. If what reached our ears was unsatisfactory, our eyes were regaled with one of those sights which repay the traveller, namely a novel and interesting incident of our journey.

They had come down by a branch stream, which joins the West river at Pe-sê, and were encamped for a fishing season of some months. When we landed our attention was at once attracted to the different appearance of these men, in physique, cast of features and bearing, from the people of "the Two Kwangs," amongst whom we had lately been.

They all carried themselves erect and had a good presence, not without a certain air of hauteur, though their frankness and intelligence of expression were more marked. Their noses were straight, such as would have been accounted good in Europe; a rarity in these flat-nosed regions. Their cheek-bones were high, and most of them wore slight moustaches, and a tuft of hair on the chin. The hair of several was undoubtedly brown: so much so that the tin-chai, who was greatly amused,

remarked that it was lighter than my own, though not quite so fair as my friend's. Their dress, the ordinary Chinese coat and trousers of the poorer class, was looped up to facilitate their work. Their queue was concealed under a kerchief or turban. There was nothing remarkable in the mode of wearing the head-gear, which was simply of ordinary blue, locally made cotton merely twisted round the head and tucked in, at the end, on one side. Round the waist they wore a strip of cloth, as girdle; to this was fastened a small bait-basket (a couple of inches in diameter and three deep), with small fish, cut up, ready for use. An apron, reaching from the waist to twelve inches below the knee, made of some coarse fibre, served as protection from the water when fishing.

Whilst the tin-chai and I were busy engaging the fishermen in conversation, my friend, C. W., in the

CORMORANT FISHERS.

most artless way, was photographing them, having resort to the subterfuge of appearing to fix his eye and instrument intently upon a most uninteresting knoll in the background. We found the men frank and obliging,

for they at once acceded to our request to show us their mode of fishing, which was evidently executed by the aid of the large number of birds perched round.

On a word from their headman, each let loose two birds, which proved to be the fishing cormorant, the whole of which, of their own accord, hopped on to the gunwales of the canoes and remained there making a loud noise, a sort of crake, which seemed to bespeak hunger. It was a ravenous cry, if one may use the term. Perhaps the craking noise was aided by the piece of string round the neck of each bird, fastened to prevent them swallowing their captures.

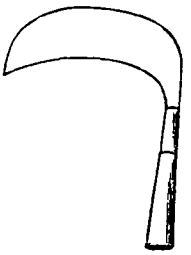
In a few minutes all the thirty men were in their canoes, each made of three thin planks secured together by rattans, with a butt-end plank at either end. Each boatman had his two birds alongside. Having pushed off at a given signal, they commenced propelling themselves against stream, using a length of bamboo as oar, and uttering a succession of loud cries as an accompaniment. The birds dispersed in the water while the men let down each a net, forming thus channels into which the fish are driven. The cormorants, on the alert, dive and secure the fish, which they bring back to the boatmen. We saw none caught, during a beat which lasted ten minutes; but probably, as they had told us, it was not the proper time (it was then about eight o'clock in the morning). Curious to say, the men would accept no present, nor even a drink! These birds, in some parts of China, are said to be so clever and in such control that they are let loose without

a string or neck-ring (described before), and bring back the fish. They seemed to recognise their master's voice, and returned at once when called. We were told that,

CORMORANT-FISHING WITH RAFT.

if one should capture a fish too heavy for him, another comes to his assistance! After each capture, a small instalment of food is given them, in the shape of the small fish we noticed, or bean-curd.

While at anchor for the men's mid-day chow, we entered into conversation with a lad, who was standing by. He showed us a curved *dha* or knife, of local manufacture (as in sketch), which is used for cutting bamboo or grass. It bore the maker's name and seemed to be of excellent material.



He was astonished when I asked whether there were any ponies in the neighbourhood and if carts were used. He replied, "Yes; of course." No doubt it seemed a matter of course to the young gentleman, whose wanderings had probably never taken him farther than the nearest village fair. That village was not as Athens, where people collected together from divers regions merely to hear and tell new things. Later in the day we came upon some carts, drawn by buffaloes. The stream was now very clear, and ran over a shingly bottom which we could see clearly; and here and there we noticed several turtles. The boatmen actually landed a small one; and a big one was nearly spiked by one of the crew by means of his bamboo pole, which has a spike at the end. The boatmen pulled up for a cup of tea before attacking a fierce rapid, the last but one of consequence before reaching Pe-sê.

During the day, a horrible sight came floating by close to our boat—it was the body of a newly-born child. Far from exciting any pity or compassion from the boatmen, it seemed to afford them great amusement. As they noticed us looking at it, to our amazement they

jokingly called out, "Chow, chow (food, food)." It is almost incredible that human beings could find it in their heart to jest on such a subject. The person who usually performs the murderous act is the father of the child. Midwives and personal friends generally decline it as being none of their business, and as affording an occasion for blame or unpleasant reflection in future years. Generally the mother prefers that the child should be given away instead of being destroyed. Sometimes, however, the parents agree to destroy, rather than give away, their infant daughter, in order to keep it from a life of poverty or shame.

AN EVENING REST.

In the evening, after anchoring, we had a visit from our gunboat captain, an old gentleman of pleasantly frank and open manner. He brought with him a brother officer, who was a passenger with him to Pe-sĕ. The gunboat was one of the largest size, really a handsome little craft of the usual Chinese pattern. We had

cigarettes, a little cognac, tea and a long talk. He told us that Pe-sê is unhealthy at certain seasons of the year; notably throughout May and September, and we had heard lower down the river that a sickness existed at those times in Pe-sê, owing to the badness of the water, which was fatal to strangers. The malady causes the body to swell and produces pains in the bowels and convulsions. There can be little doubt that there is some truth in this report, and probably the sickness is due in a large measure to the water.

At Man-hao, on the Song-ka, a local fever of a deadly description is reported to exist, but it is probably much exaggerated; at least Dupuis did not find it so unhealthy as tradition makes it. That places like Man-hao and Pe-sê, built in narrow valleys, cased in by high hills and situated on the banks of rivers, should be at certain times unhealthy is not to be wondered at. Their bad reputation is due in large measure to the Yünnan hill people, who descend into the hot and moist atmosphere of the valleys during the unhealthy season. Being used to a drier climate they catch chills, get fever and die.

Above this, for the most part, low hills lie close to the river. Between these and the bank are bluffs and knolls, of soft red sandstone overlying white sandstone.

The country had now assumed a more bare and barren appearance, relieved here and there by a stretch of level plain, highly cultivated. Close to the village of Pak-quat, which stands opposite a large sandy island of the same name which is cultivated, the channel

narrows on one side of the island to a hundred feet. On the other side there is a passage some six hundred feet broad, but too shallow for craft of our draught. Pak-quat stands on a high, sandy (south) bank, at the bottom of a low range of hills, on a sharp bend in the river. The place is a wretched collection of mud huts, grass thatched, having a miserable look. A couple of tall cotton-wood trees stand, bare and ragged, like huge bamboo poles, in front of the village.

Some five miles above this Nga-wan was passed on the south bank; it is a hamlet of no consequence. Soon after we came to an old fort, standing on a small bluff on the south bank. This fort was constructed and held by the Taipings; after their evacuation it was kept garrisoned for a time but abandoned some years ago, and is now in ruins. Its walls are of mud, having four large gateways and a turret at the corners which lie next the river. We noticed sun-dried bricks as large in dimensions as 15 in. by 12 in. by 4 in. In the interior buildings some fine slabs of stone were lying about. The inside (some six acres in area) was mostly ploughed up.

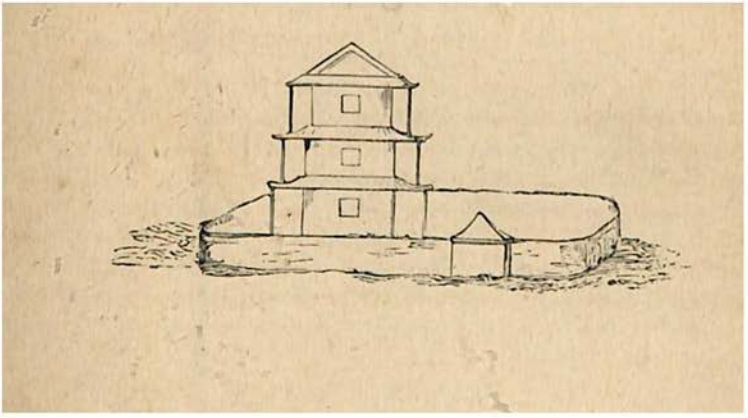
A mile further, the Pon-tsün rapid was passed. It is a very fierce one, with the water running like a mill-stream, and lies just below the village of the same name. The village occupies about half a mile of the river bank; it is built in one row, and has a clean, neat and prosperous look. Beautiful clumps of bamboo, and some fine trees, add an air of grace and refinement to this well-to-do, agricultural village.

Close by we noticed a dozen women or so and, later on, a party of men carrying, at a rapid trot, manure from boats moored to the bank. They used circular shallow baskets, suspended from either end of a flat bamboo over the shoulder, much the same as those used by the Shans, who probably borrowed the idea from China, through the medium of Yünnan.

The tracking and poling throughout the day was very severe; the men could hardly get the boat over the Pon-tsün rapid, although they knew that their "promised land," namely Pe-sê, lay only some three miles ahead. They had, as several times before, to creep along the foot-board, using hands and feet, with the poles fixed to their shoulders.

Captain Chow kept cheering them up every now and then, while they made a more diabolical noise, if that be possible, than ever; yelling and stamping as if Bedlam were loose. We noticed a number of women and children grubbing up grass, growing alongside the water, for the pigs. Close to Pe-sê the red sandstone bluffs on the north touch the river, which has cut through them here. Rubble stone culverts and causeways were noticed, with a foot-track wide enough for riding. We saw a party of four brightly-dressed gentlemen, with their ponies gaily caparisoned, making their way to the Nam-kok T'ing, a three-storied building, standing half a mile below Pe-sê on a high knoll close to the river on the north bank.

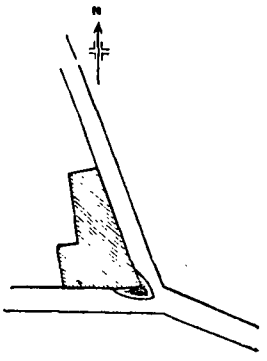
It has a handsome low enclosure wall and shrubs planted about. The structure is square, with the projecting roofs supported by wooden posts.



CHAPTER XXXII.

Pe-sê — Our letter to the Sub-Prefect — Its imposing appearance — The Sub-Prefect's boat — An admirer of Sir Harry Parkes — Broken sleep—Weather from Canton—Sedan-chairs—Visit to the Prefect—The reception room—Chinese chairs—Polite etiquette—Questions about age and the R.G.S.—Consent of the Prefect to be photographed — Very much married — Presents to children — Slighting term for wives and children — Belief in Fung-shui — Despised by the Prefect —Missionaries' religion—Potions — Making conversion pay — Prejudices of the people.

FROM the bend of the river below, Pe-sê came in sight. It lies on the apex formed by two branches of the West river, one running north, still in Kwang-si; and one west, which enters Yünnan for a short distance. The town is a t'ing, or town of the second order, and is under the orders of a Sub-Prefect. There is also a military garrison of some two thousand troops under the command of a Chen-t'ai, or Brigadier-General.



The town, as we approached it, was lined on both sides, but especially up the north branch of the stream, by numbers of different shaped and sized craft; and this, together with the crowded and busy air of the place at first sight, bespoke prosperity and business. The town in fact had a more thriving look than any

we passed since Wu-chau. It is built on a slight rising ground, so that the houses, of well-built brick work, rise above each other.

We sent our cards to the Sub-Prefect at once; but meanwhile a soldier appeared as guard. A huge crowd speedily collected, which, joined by fresh recruits, did not diminish till darkness came, and they could no longer see into the interior of the boat. The Sub-Prefect was away for the day at the Nam-kok-ting, the pavilion mentioned before; but our cards were sent after him, with our despatch and letter of introduction from the Viceroy of "the Two Kwangs." The said letter was a most imposing-looking document, whose size, 16 inches by 9, and stamps, should have inspired awe, if stationery can do it. In the afternoon, the mandarin's boat, a very fine affair, a sort of state barge, passed up the north branch, in which we were lying. The loud sounds of gongs on board, attracted our attention.

The boat was of the same pattern as the class of gunboats which had accompanied us, but considerably bigger, and the doors and windows were gaily decorated. The windows were of open lattice-work, so as to offer a view around. The insignia of office were hanging outside; and the usual collection of domestics and hangers-on, which forms the shadow of every official, made a brightly-coloured group on the bow of the boat. Soon afterwards a subordinate from the Sub-Prefect arrived with a missive carrying expressions of regret at his being absent. Chinese etiquette requires

lavish profusion in these matters. He stated that next day, between eight and ten o'clock, he would be delighted to receive us. In the afternoon C. W. went to repay the visit of the commander of the gunboat, by name Captain Lu, and to take him a small present of a pocket-compass, as a memento, in return for his courtesy and pleasant attention to us during the three days we had been together. He was pleased with the gift and gave C. W. much general information, and gossiped away for some time. He came from Fa-yuen, near Canton, and had been most of his service in the Canton province, which he preferred.

He had been according to his account an officer, no doubt of some petty sort, in Canton at the time of our occupation, and before it. Of Sir Harry Parkes he spoke with great admiration, and of some other Englishman, who was with him at that trying time, as being good and kind men. He seemed to have been astonished, if not impressed, with the moderation of our countrymen. It seemed curious that my friend should have a long talk, on the frontier of Yünnan, regarding Sir Harry Parkes, our late fellow-passenger of seven weeks ago, to whose kindness we owed the best French maps which we had lying on our table, as well as other assistance.

The night was close and oppressive for the first time since we left Canton, and in the morning we experienced that wearying sensation, resulting from the want of sound sleep. Luckily the weather had been wonderfully good almost every day since we set foot

on board our boat, notwithstanding the predictions of our friends in Canton that we were certain to have rain nearly all the time. Twelve to thirteen hours' survey work each alternate day, with plotting and writing on the other, is no child's play, and would have been an impossibility if we had had bad weather, which term for our work would include either heat or rain. In the morning we went, after breakfast, to pay our visit to the Sub-Prefect. Having ascended the steep bank, we found two ragged and dirty sedan-chairs, into which

A CHINESE GENTLEMAN IN A SEDAN-CHAIR.

Mr. Hong-beng-kaw and I found some difficulty in entering. They were far and away the most disreputable I had seen since landing in China. This was accounted for by the fact of these being the only two

public ones in the town. Those which we had seen being carried along the river-bank road were of course private property, and therefore much superior to the public ones. Every man of any position owns one, and there are no strangers passing through Pe-sê to make public letting of sedan-chairs a profitable employment.

Ten minutes, at first along the northern river face, and then through the city wall along some well-paved but narrow streets, which were well-built for the most part, brought us to the Prefect's yamen.

It was of the usual pattern, but in better order than had been commonly seen by us. The ordinary official poles or masts, called wei-kan, which are erected at the doorway of all Chinese official residences, the spacious ornamental gateway of the entrance, with the watchman's box next it, and the general rambling arrangement of the yamen, offered nothing more remarkable than other edifices of the same sort. It brought back to my mind the pleasant days at a certain hospitable yamen in Canton. A crowd of rag, tag, and bobtail, the mass of urchins and idlers and vagrants, who form the "leisure men," as they are called, of Chinese towns, surged in after us, and seemed not to be under the control of the numerous attendants of the yamen. We were ushered into the reception room or hall, a long, lofty and spacious apartment, with windows on either side. Some half-dozen chairs (those square-backed, high wooden Chinese chairs, which are so very uncomfortable), covered with silk

embroidery and red cloth cushions and hangings, stood on either side. At the end of the room was a raised platform, in the centre of which stood a low, small table some five inches high, and on either side of this two embroidered, covered seats with footstools.

On these somewhat imposing, but uncomfortable, seats of honour the Prefect and I took our places, after a

INTERIOR OF PREFECT'S YAMEN AT PE-SÊ.

little of the usual polite objection to first sitting down; a very little, I say, for no Western can ever approach any Chinaman in the matter of polite etiquette;—even Chesterfield would have been a mere babe and suckling in this land of ceremony and polite deportment. It is all very well for Europeans, strong in their own self-conceit, to laugh at this punctiliousness. I must

confess that it struck me very differently; I felt my western *gaucherie* very distinctly, and make free admission of this.

A vast number of the invariable ingredients of any yamen scene, namely the secretaries, servants and attachés, stood on one side. The Sub-Prefect seemed an intelligent man and, after a brief period of the imperturbability usual to Chinese gentlemen, warmed into animation, especially after he clearly understood that I was no missionary.

He was a native of the Che-kiang province, and had never met a European before to converse with, although he had seen them. After other questions, usual as *pourparlers*, having enquired his venerable age and told him that I had "vainly eaten rice for thirty-five years" or, in other words, my age, he asked closely what my profession was and my object in travelling in these distant parts. When I explained that our object was to gather information, especially geographical, he seemed interested, and asked me all about the Royal Geographical Society; how it was managed, whether they assisted travellers with funds and what rewards were given to travellers.

These things were explained to him as could best be done. He seemed astonished when I told him the system of our learned societies at home, and that the greatest reward, which any private traveller, such as myself, could expect, was a gold medal. Much as he seemed interested I fear the mandarin, in his inner heart, thought the game hardly worth the candle. Our rest-

less curiosity in the matter of travel no Chinaman can understand.

He asked a number of questions regarding our instruments, and expressed a wish to see them and to learn how we used them. This, of course, I was only too delighted to explain to him; and to my astonishment he was greatly pleased at our having photographic apparatus with us, and at once acquiesced in my offer to photograph him or his children. This was astounding, for it was against everything which we had been taught to expect. I did not venture to mention the ladies as a possible subject for photography, for they not only never are placed *en évidence* but are never mentioned, even in the way of a modest inquiry regarding health, or some such trifle. A Chinaman, judging from the absence of any female traces about his establishment, might be unmarried, but they are generally very much married. Even children, as a rule, are not produced on the occasion of a visit, except the visitor be on very intimate terms, when they all appear, sometimes in embarrassing numbers; for, after kneeling and feigning to knock their heads on the floor, cruel cum-shaw steps in and, I am informed, the custom is to give each child a present, say a dollar,—a great tax on the resources of a poor man.

In this strange country children are termed *insects* or *worms*, in the sense of insignificant trifles or chits, as we sometimes call them. The name used does not bear the literal meaning of bug, I believe, as has sometimes been stated. A host, when asked the number of his

children, replies, "the Fates have been unkind to me in granting me only one little insect." The wife, when mentioned by the husband, which happens as seldom as possible, is called "my dull thorn," "the thorn in my ribs," or "the mean one of the inner rooms."

In connection with our instruments and geographical work I was astounded when the Sub-Prefect, an educated Chinese gentleman, asked me seriously whether we understood geomancy, and whether we could tell the fortune of a place by means of our instruments. When I explained that we Westerns were complete unbelievers in any such power he shook his head gravely, and plainly stated his firm belief in "Fung-shui" (or wind and water rulers). My polite statement of my incredulity in this geomantic influence, which is the veriest mixture of superstition and nonsense that ever held sway over any people, was received by the Sub-Prefect with a look which clearly meant, "there are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy." I sank in his opinion from that moment.

He instanced, with an air of entire conviction, the case of Pe-sê itself. "Some time ago the Nam-kok-ting, the pavilion below the town, was allowed by the people of this place to fall into disrepair, and Pe-sê lost its prosperity. On its being rebuilt,—indeed from the moment it was raised from ruin,—the town regained its former good fortune and began to flourish."

Regarding the missionaries (whose utility he could not see, although he granted that many good men must

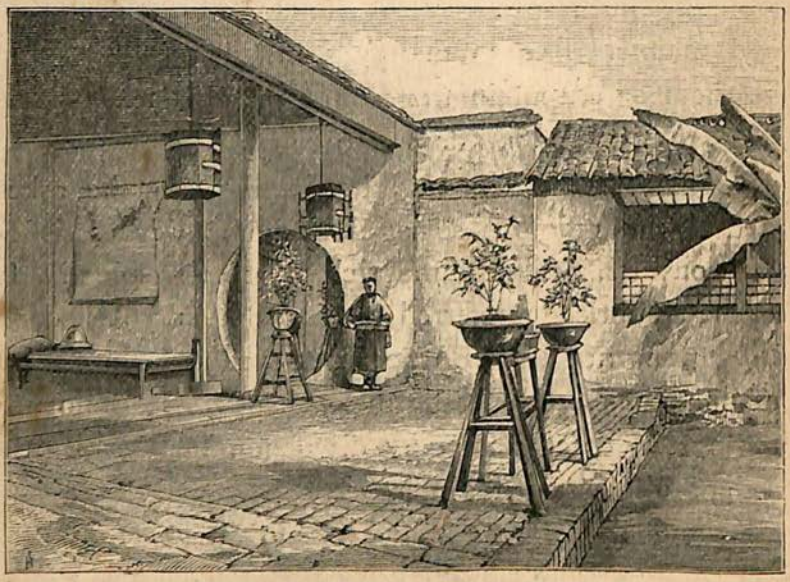
be amongst them, as they devoted their lives to unselfish work), he asked whether they had any *medicine* which they administered to their converts. I did my best to disabuse him of the idea but, no doubt, with absolutely no result. With a man cultured and of good manners like so many of his countrymen, and like them so stupid in these childish superstitions, it is useless to argue or to attempt to convince.

He had his touch of satire in him, for he asked whether the religious societies at home were satisfied with converts, who became richer by conversion? In this he doubtlessly referred to the popular belief, common among not a few Europeans as well as Chinese, that a Chinese convert generally makes it pay. It is not my province to enter upon any discussion here as to the truth or otherwise of his inference.

Talking of Fung-shui and missionaries I think the wisdom of erecting churches or cathedrals, whose steeples are supposed to take away the geomantic good fortune of the countryside, is open to grave doubt. I do not believe that the deeply-rooted prejudices of the people can easily, or with any good result, be thus run counter to; and think that a considerable portion of the ill-will evinced by the people to foreigners arises from this and matters closely connected with it.

The experience which the people have had of Europeans, with whom they have been thrown in contact, especially in the earlier days, has often not been of a character to promote friendly feeling or esteem. Avarice and greed of power have been the leading traits with

which Europeans have been largely credited by the Chinese, and it must be confessed not without some reason.



SCENE IN PREFECT'S YAMEN, PE-SÊ.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Visit to the Brigadier-General—Troops on paper—Pleasant, hearty manners—The "Panthay" rebellion—The Chinese dragon—Bamboo houses—Rosy-cheeked women—Petty squeezing—Insubordination of servants—Desertion of Hong-beng-kaw—His misgivings—The tin-chai's refusal to proceed—Our dilemma, and resolve—Return visit of the Prefect and General—Rocher's map—Getting on by any means—Nothing succeeds like success—Margary's murder—An heroic "Sultan"—"Spare the people"—Terrible war—Plague—Coats of mail.

FROM the Sub-Prefect we went to the Chen-t'ai or Brigadier-General, under whom there are, *on paper*, some two thousand troops quartered at Pe-sê. I say on paper for, though the General draws the pay for two thousand, I doubt greatly whether that number could be mustered. This officer, whose name is Li-hsin-kü, met us at the door of his reception room. His handsome, manly face and frank manner soon set us at our ease. He had a face which looked as if its owner had been accustomed to command; a straight nose, high cheek-bones and prominence over the eyebrows. The absence of the left ear was a marked characteristic. His heartiness of manner and dramatic action charmed us after our experience of the *laisser-faire* manner of most Chinese officials, which, by-the-bye, is as provoking as the imbecile manner of our "crutch and toothpick" youth.

We had a long talk, during which we discovered that

he was not only a native of Yünnan (the country which we were about to visit), but that he was the famous Li-hsin-kü of the late Yünnan Mahomedan war, known for some time in Europe under the name of the *Panthay* rebellion. This erroneous name for the Ma-

GENERAL LI-HSIN-KÜ.

homedan rebels has been disposed of by Mr. Colborne Baber.

When I told him that his name was known to me, from what I had read of the war, his manner, which suddenly became quieter, seemed to indicate that he was

gratified, and he was delighted when I promised to show him the map of Yünnan compiled by Rocher. After several cups of tea we took our departure, favourably impressed with the old gentleman who, though wanting in the somewhat punctilious courtesy of his civil *confrère*, and which is common to the civil body, had a bluff, simple, hearty way which pleased me perhaps more. The old gentleman, against my remonstrances repeatedly made, saw us to our sedan-chairs.

Before entering the General's yamen, while waiting a few minutes outside for our arrival to be announced, we examined the rude fresco, of the dragon rampant, on the wall opposite the entrance gateway. It was a very rude affair in red, black and white, representing a huge monster, having no resemblance to any known animal. The type is said, by some authorities, to be taken from the sea serpent or some similar monster, while the iguanodon, which geological research has discovered, is said by others to present a close counterpart of the Chinese dragon. On each side of the mouth are whiskers and its beard, it is said, contains a bright pearl; the breath is sometimes changed into water and sometimes into fire; and its voice is like "the jingling of copper pans." It probably is meant to represent an emblem of what is imposing and powerful. An ingenious but somewhat fanciful theory has been created to prove that it represents *greed*, as a warning to the officials resident opposite that coveteousness is a thing to avoid!

On our return we came by a slightly different road,

and I noticed, though the houses were mostly of a grey brick, many of clay or mud, and a few with bamboo posts and the walls of split bamboo intertwined, like those commonly found in Burmah and Siam. At the doorstep women were gathered, old and young, trying to get a peep at the foreigners; even those of good station showing no signs of the prudery or fear, which is commonly evinced by Chinese women of the better class. Some of them were fair and comely, with rosy cheeks. They came from Yünnan, I was told.

A "YAMEN" LICTOR.

I was amused to see the way in which the two lictors, sent from the yamen, who ran in front of the sedan-

chair, made feint to lay about them with great violence. Their attentions were divided mainly between the crowd of urchins and the itinerant pigs, neither of which, however, paid the slightest attention to the ragged rascals. These poor wretches are the residuum of the yamens, and have to eke out a living by their wits, which are exercised, in the pettiest system of squeezing, on those who are neglected, as altogether beneath notice, by the superior hangers-on of the yamen.

On returning to the boat, after three hours spent on my visits, we found no breakfast had been got ready, although it was past one o'clock. The cook had gone to market, so the boy said. For the last two or three days I had been receiving these little signs which, added together, made strong evidence that our Chinese servants were inclined to be less subordinate than was right or pleasant. This was doubtless owing to the fact that Mr. Hong-beng-kaw had thrown up his appointment.

This most unfortunate event was partly the result of the misconceived idea which Mr. Hong-beng-kaw had formed regarding his duties, but mainly, I think, from his disinclination for the Yünnan journey. Our mutual relations had become so strained that, notwithstanding every effort on our part to treat him in every way as one of ourselves and with all consideration, he took offence, or made pretence of so doing, and declined to go further than Pe-sê. This was, at the time, a terrible blow to me.

Soon after leaving Canton it had become apparent to

us that he had little conception of the duties which reasonably might be expected of him. He had no idea of the subordination which is by no means incompatible with friendliness, but which is an absolute necessity on any expedition like ours. There was a regrettable absence of all energy, and we soon discovered that he was (however pleasant a companion, and here I wish to do him all justice), from want of zeal and go, totally unfitted for the work on which we were engaged. The fact is, I believe, that he had been delusively attracted by the hope of vague adventure, and the novelty of travel in strange lands. The early enthusiasm which he had evinced (an enthusiasm whose buoyancy had caused us misgivings from the first) was gradually dissipated, and left no trace behind.

As we neared Pe-sê, the end of our water journey and the commencement of our march, the realities of the work before us were forced on his attention, and the hardships, and possibly dangers, of the journey through Yünnan and the Laos countries (regions bearing an evil repute, as regarded climate and security of life) became more and more apparent and distasteful to him. The result was that, just before reaching Pe-sê, he declared his inability to proceed beyond that town, and his desire to return by the very ho-tau, in which we had made our journey up the river. When a man has lost all interest and all heart in an undertaking like ours, it was useless to persuade him to remain.

Luckily for us we had one resource left. The tin-chai at first declared his willingness to proceed (though on

exorbitant terms, to which I was compelled to accede), and Mr. Hewlett had kindly given me leave to take him, in case of dire need, should he be willing to go with us. When arrangements were being made to commence the Yünnan journey, hearing of our head interpreter's retirement, he at first expressed his desire to return to Canton, and finally flatly refused to accompany us. Here then was a cruel position to be placed in. Neither of our interpreters were willing to go forward and our servants seeing this, and getting an inkling of the life before them, were showing symptoms of insubordination, which were far from reassuring.

Our hearts sank within us, and we were placed in one of those untoward dilemmas which are so depressing, and which make it so hard a matter to put on a brave face. We screwed up our courage to the sticking-point, however, and tried to look complete indifference. In such a state of affairs, it was far from unlikely that all our servants would strike. It was not to be expected that *they*, who could not speak a word of English, would attempt the journey with two Englishmen who could neither of them speak a word of Chinese. Determined not to be foiled, we gave out our intention to proceed alone, and commenced making preparations.

Without servants and interpreters, we would be forced to change our route from the one originally projected, namely through the south-eastern portion of Yünnan (by Kwang-nan, Kai-hua and Man-hao) to one more commonly travelled through Kwang-nan-fu to Yünnan-fu, the capital. Late as it was in the season, when

every day, indeed every hour, was of importance to us, it was a sore and bitter disappointment to have to make this long détour, involving an extra journey of over thirty days.

But "the best laid schemes o' mice an' men gang aft agley," and necessity is not to be contradicted. Besides, I had hopes that this change of route, from one less travelled, to the main thoroughfare between the Canton river and the capital, would induce the servants, at least, to stick to us and perhaps induce the tin-chai to go after all. In any case our object was to get away from Pe-sê, and let events shape themselves afterwards. Possibly we might, when halfway to the capital, when the servants could not well leave us, be able to strike south and return to some point, say Men-tzu or Lin-an-fu, close to our originally intended route.

Early in the afternoon the Prefect first, and soon after the General, came to return our visit, each with the usual procession, awe-inspiring to the Chinese mind but tawdry, and perfectly expressed by the word ragamuffin, from our point of view. First came the lictors, our friends of the morning, only four in number now, with their black felt hats and whips; next a number of boys, with red boards inscribed with gilt characters, some of which express orders to be silent, to stand aside and others the Mandarin's rank. The round red umbrella next appeared and after that the sedan-chair, in which was seated the big man, carried by four porters. Following the chair came the card-bearers,—for the cards have a porter to themselves — secretaries and servants. One

officer rode behind and one in front of the General, who was in a chair.

With military officers it is usual either to ride, or to have a charger led while they are carried in a chair; but in this case the General had dispensed with this piece of etiquette. It is considered effeminate for military men not to ride; but the General, a man once of great activity, is no longer strong and has to take to the chair.

The Prefect had a look at all our instruments, and seemed interested in them. He looked at our maps which, however, he did not seem to understand, but brightened up at the sight of the Chinese map. Regarding the local topography he knew nothing, and all the information I could get out of him was regarding the position of Chen-an-fu, which I found, as we had suspected on our way up the river, is not situated on any river, and is wrongly shown in all the French and English maps which we had with us.

This place is the Chin-ngan of English maps, and is shown on a stream, which is made to debouch into the West river above Ko-hua, but which, in reality, does not exist. We looked for this stream on our way up, but could find no trace of it; and Captain Lu, of the last gunboat, was the first positively to tell us, from his personal experience, that Chen-an lay on no such stream. The nearest road from the West river to that city is from Nga-paw, three and a half days by land, as already mentioned. After a long and friendly talk, on seeing the General coming, the Prefect went away.

The military mandarin took more interest in Rocher's map of Yünnan than anything else, because the Mahomedan rebel camps were marked on it. This old soldier of fortune, along with Yang-yü-kö, another famous general, rose rapidly from a subordinate position, through the events of the Mussulman rebellion of Yünnan. Our present acquaintance commanded a corps in the north, and Yang-yü-ko in the south. The latter was the general who afterwards had the honour of capturing Taili, if honour there be in taking a place which has been gained by treachery. They are both reported, and rightly so by all accounts, to have been rapidly promoted, I might say made, by the notorious Fu-t'ai of the capital at that time, now the present Governor of Fukien. Judging from his unscrupulous character, the rumour that these men rose by being not only able, but unscrupulous, instruments in the Fu-t'ai's hands bears the stamp of extreme probability. In this country "*rien succède que le succès*," and the means of military, or civil success are never inquired into, so long as the result be considered satisfactory. Both are reported to have gained wealth during the war.

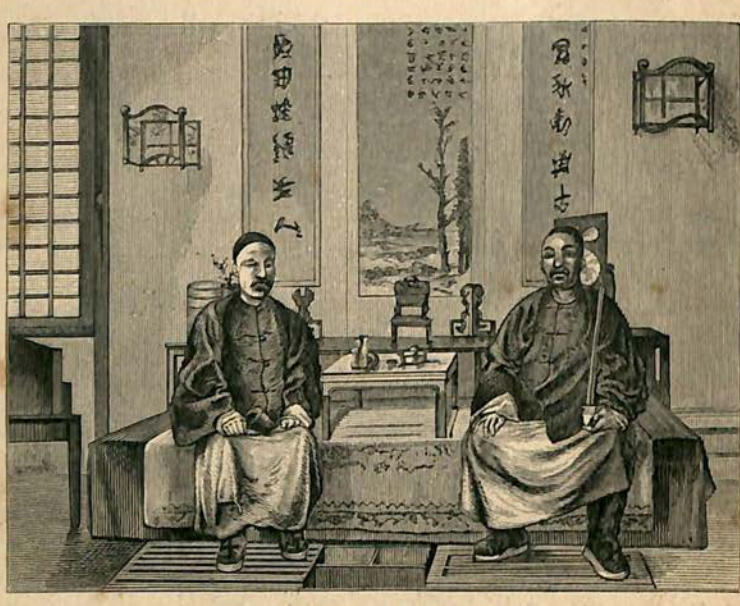
Our friend the General told us that he was at T'eng-yueh (called Momein by the Burmese), when Margary's death occurred, and that he was in retirement, being in mourning at the time. He was, *of course*, greatly grieved at what had occurred, and indicated that the affair would not have happened if he had been in command. According to his account Margary's death was due to the train-bands of T'eng-

'yueh, a most troublesome and dangerous set of ruffians. His explanation was that the border countries, always unsafe, were in a state of outlawry at that time, and unmanageable.

His account of the war was highly interesting, confirming Mr. Baber's most graphic account, as given in the report of his journey when attached to the Grosvenor Mission. The horrors of the war he dwelt upon with great vehemence, at great length, and he summed up by saying, "The people were slaughtered till I got sick!" He said the account given by Baber of the incident of Tu Wên-hsiu, the so-called "Mahomedan Sultan," delivering himself up, after having taken poison, was generally credited. The dying request made by him, "Shao-shajên" (spare the people) seems, unlike many famous historical incidents, really to have occurred. The population of his native town was, he told us, reduced from 20,000 to 1,000 during the war. His account of the plague during and after the war was terrible. The scarcity of rice was fearful, the price being at times twenty-five taels per *picul* (*tan*) of Yünnan. The *tan* is equal to 176 Chinese lbs. Salt was nearly worth its weight in silver!

He told us stories of Ma Ju-lung (the Generalissimo now retired) and his coat of mail, which he is said to have worn under his fur robes. This seems to have been a common practice with the Imperial officers. He added that his three years' term of office in Pe-sê, which he heartily disliked, was up; and he expected to be relieved soon, when he was to retire. He much

preferred the cold and bracing climate of Yünnan, his native country, of which he would hear nothing disparaging.



TWO MANDARINS "AT HOME."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Feeing servants — Puerh tea — A crowd — Ourselves as the Chinese see us — Use of guilds — Tubbing — Our best man — Preparations for a start — Photographing the Prefect — Peeping holes for bright eyes — Kindness of Father Becx and Monseigneur Chose before start — Determination to proceed to Yünnan — "A Buddha's hand" — A Chinese craze — Courtesy of Charles Wahab — Porter in thimblefuls — Any number of husbands — Photographing the General and his wife — Never abandon a comrade.

THE system of present-giving, from which we suffered greatly at Pè-sê, is an intolerable one. For each petty gift received you have not only to make a return, but to tip the servants two or three times its value. The consequence is that it told heavily on us, who *paid* our servants. The yamen men live on squeezes and perquisites. A gift of Puerh tea, famous throughout China, was given to us by the General, and we sent it home as a curiosity. We presented some little gifts, which seemed to be appreciated, and found that the great thing was to give nothing that required *winding up!* All day we had on the shore a crowd of some 500 round the boat. The windows were absolutely darkened by faces flattened against the panes. During the Prefect's visit the crowd surged in, at the back of his people, on all sides.

This curiosity gets "monotonous" after a time. The Chinese are certainly a strange people. But one must

recollect they think the same of us! We consider them eccentric, because they wear white when mourning; drink only hot beverages; cramp their women's feet; never walk, if possible, even for a few yards; look upon women as "dull" thorns; and so on.

Their idea of us is that we walk without joints in our legs; wear red clothes; have red hair, and blue eyes sunk in the head, or vertical, or at the back; that we fatigue ourselves on every occasion needlessly, and have the restless curiosity of monkeys. It is *not* the case, I am told, however, that they consider the seat of the intellect to be in *the stomach*, as has been so often reported by Europeans. This the Chinese deny, and their name for the head, "the brain-bag," seems to favour this view.

There are several provincial guildhalls or clubs at Pe-sê, the Canton one being the principal. These commercial companies have local committees and a secretary, and settle the prices of goods, rates of wages, and other commercial questions. The guilds are very useful, and perform all sorts of offices for the people of the province which they represent.

A CHINESE RAZOR.

The boatmen, one and all, had undergone a complete change of costume, and now appeared in their "swagger" clothes. They were carefully shaved round the queue, and endured a tubbing of slightly longer duration, and hotter temperature, than usual. The old lieutenant, the man whose energy and masterliness on board had been our admiration, actually had *at last*

A CHINESE STREET-BARBER. (*To face p.* 266, Vol. I.)

taken off his leggings, and subjected himself to the usual hot-water tub process before described.

These leggings, or bandages of coarse blue cloth, were worn by the men when they had much tracking to do; and our lieutenant wore them from Canton to Pe-sê, a period of thirty-four days, without once changing them —so far as I know. The ankles of this weatherbeaten old gentleman resembled some gnarled tree bark, in colour and texture. He was a good old fellow and, notwithstanding this failing and his *brusque* manner, the best man, out and out, on board the ho-tau; indeed one of the best, I have no doubt, to be found on the waters of the West river.

The journey hence to Kwang-nan is two days by boat, and six days' march over terribly hilly country. The 12th of March was mainly spent by me in arranging for our land journey and preparing for our start, a tedious and dilatory business in this country. There was some difficulty about getting boats for our two days' voyage. The great event of the day, however, was the photographing of the Prefect, which my friend C. W. undertook. Nearly all the photographs had, hitherto, been done by him, as I had quite enough to do with my journal, arranging matters, and my share of the survey work. On one or two odd occasions I took some when he was busily engaged. The photographic visit was a great success, for the Prefect allowed not only himself to be twice taken, but C. W. also got photographs of his yamen, reception hall and tribunal or court of justice. A photograph of his secretary was also obtained. The

Prefect—strange to say—was taken in his ordinary every-day dress; for we found that all mandarins, whom we afterwards photographed, chose their official costume.

The ladies of the establishment, as I anticipated, made no appearance; but doubtless their inquisitive eyes

THE PREFECT OF PE-SÊ "AT HOME."

were not far from the small windows which were placed, I noticed, in each cloth *purda* and door. Mr. Hong-beng-kaw (whose ideas, in the matter of ceremonial, were eminently Chinese in their grandeur) was, I fear, terribly shocked with C. W. for the utter want of know-

ledge of *bon ton* which he displayed in the matter of this visit. First, C. W.'s Chinese cards were finished, having come to an end under the daily demand for them, and he proposed using an English one. Next, he took one of the boatmen to carry the photographic apparatus, which was quite *infra dig.* The proper thing was to have the tin-chai to precede and announce their arrival, and so on. The tin-chai refused to go. Here I had to act the delicate part of buffer between the tin-chai and Mr. Hong-beng-kaw, for they did not hit it off at all. Willing as I was to fall in with the humour of the latter in such a matter, I had to consider the tin-chai, who was very busily engaged on different errands from myself and in getting information; moreover, I had not abandoned all hope of inducing him to accompany us to Yünnan-fu, if no further.

We could there, I anticipated, meet with the Roman Catholic missionaries and appeal to them for aid. This I was prepared to do with perfect confidence, although not of their religious persuasion, for I knew something already of the kindly and generous manner in which they ever receive the hapless traveller.

I may here mention that before leaving England I received a letter from Father Becx, the head of the Jesuit Society, inviting all members of the Society to aid me every way in their power. Monseigneur Chose, the Bishop of Canton, likewise gave me as much assistance as possible.

We had no other resource but to get away from Pe-sê, and push on to Yünnan-fu. There we hoped to obtain

assistance of some sort, to enable us to get south to our old projected route, and down to Maulmain through the Laos country. We fervently hoped it might not prove necessary for us to make our way, by Shun-ning-fu or Tali-fu, to Bhamo, or anywhere in that neighbourhood, on the North-east Burmah frontier. I could devise no better change of programme, after two days of great anxiety and sleepless nights. It was to me, without exaggeration, what the failure of some great manœuvre, on which the success of a campaign will rest, is to the general.

C. W. had every reason to believe that the photos of the Prefect would turn out successfully; and we were elated, for they will be most interesting. In any case it forms a unique instance, I believe, of a high official allowing such a dangerous innovation to be brought about as the use of that alarming apparatus, a photographic camera, in his yamen. This too, it must be remembered, by a gentleman who had never held intercourse with Europeans of any sort, and whose district was situated some eight hundred miles, by river, from Canton. We must be pardoned some little self-satisfaction at having been the first to inaugurate this not unimportant point in the "new departure" of Anglo-Chinese relations, which I hope the incident may prove.

The Prefect sent in the afternoon a "Buddha's hand," or *fu-shau*, a species of citron which my friend had noticed, and when it arrived we deluded ourselves with prospects of a pleasant-tasting fruit. This fruit is prized, however, more on account of its fragrance and appear-

ance, and can be kept for a year, according to the Chinese, but I have since heard only for three months. These fruit seem to represent the same sort of æsthetic or fashionable whim, which once made Dutch tulips the fashion in Europe. The idea of two explorers carrying a "Buddha's hand," a veritable "white elephant," some thousand miles across country is too laughable. In the language of the æsthetic school of the present day, it would be pronounced "too consummate."

My friend and the interpreter were set down to a collation of fruits, all ready cut up for consumption; with the fruit a bottle of Dublin stout was served, as a polite attention to our nationality. The Chinese gentlemen drank the stout out of tiny chinaware cups, mere thimblefuls, while C. W. was given a copper-coloured mug, such as is to be found in roadside inns at home. My friend, with that true courage which courtesy alone can give, drained off his portion, which was proportional to the Prefect's estimate of our drinking power, that is in the ratio of 20 to 1 or something of that sort—a hard task for my friend, who seldom touched anything but water or tea, and was practically a teetotaler. The ladies did not appear, the Prefect being a true Confucian, and not believing in women being allowed to enter the society of men.

Mr. Hong-beng-kaw told me that during the evening, when he went to see the Prefect, they had a long talk about Europe, and the conversation turned upon ladies entering so largely into society and having so much influence on men. Our interpreter tried to explain how

good he thought their influence, and how refining it was on the whole. The Prefect could not understand it. He said, "but *how* can women be allowed to appear and enter into conversation, as they do in Europe?" On this he kept on harping. In reply to Mr. H. B. K.'s remark that it was a good thing that in Europe a man was only allowed one wife, he said, "you think so; but are the women not allowed two husbands?" He seemed to think, to make the *bouleversement* complete, that women in Europe might have any number of husbands, as in China the men have no limit placed to their wives. The Prefect was very kind, and sent us a number of things in the afternoon, for which we felt bound to make such return as we were able.

The next day the crowds still continued, though not so great as the day after our arrival, when there must have been some five hundred gathered on the bank close to our ho-tau, many of whom got not only on the boat, but into our sitting-room.

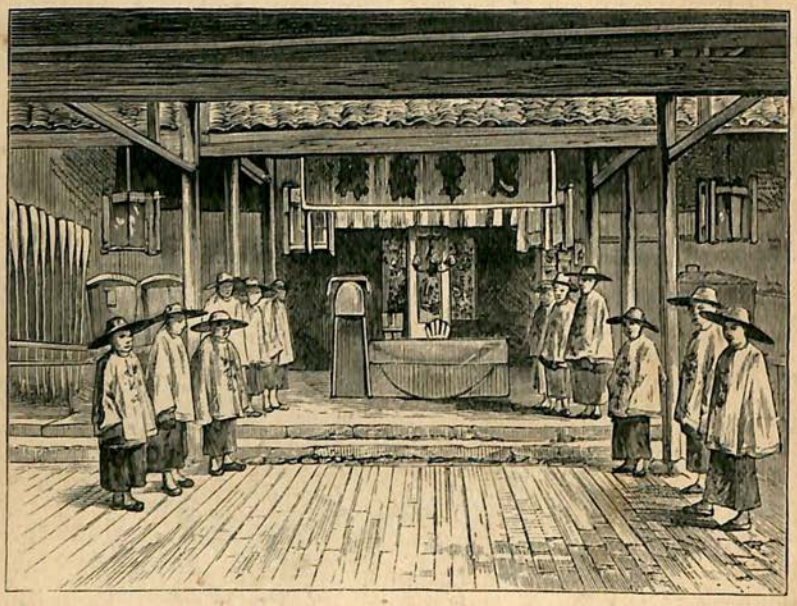
Great as the surprise had been at the Prefect's allowing us to photograph him, we were more astonished next day. The General's son, a pretty youth of sixteen who looked very effeminate and vastly different from his father, called with his tutor, a very talkative gentleman, and looked at all our instruments and watches. After much conversation on various subjects the *raison d'être* of the visit came out. The old General wanted to be photographed also, having thought over my offer of yesterday, and having heard of the Prefect's giving way from the old conservative ways. C. W. at once

went and photographed him in his robes of state, a magnificent costume. His reception room was then taken with all the servants about, as well as several views outside the yamen, with a group of "braves," ragged-looking soldiery, and with other attachés of the yamen.

GENERAL LI HSIN-KÜ, WITH AIDES-DE-CAMP.

A still greater surprise was in store! The General asked, in the middle of the operation, whether the Prefect's lady had been photographed and, on being answered in the negative, said nothing more. At the end, however, he turned round to C. W. and asked, "Would you be good enough to take my humble wife's

photograph?" This was astounding! Of course C. W. declared his perfect willingness and delight, and a portrait of the lady, together with that of another of high connections who was visiting them, was obtained. The General's lady, some forty-five years of age, was richly but gaudily attired in magnificent embroidered silk, the official costume which is sometimes presented by the



ENTRANCE TO GENERAL'S YAMEN.

Emperor. The General was all anxiety to see the photos, but, unluckily, being pressed for time, we could not develop them at Pe-sê.

Mr. Hong-beng-kaw showed no signs of compunction at abandoning us, with no means of interpretation, and seemed to look on the journey of two Englishmen unattended by any interpreter, from Pe-sê to Yünnan-

fu, as one might on a pleasure excursion up the Rigi!

While trying to write without any bias in this matter, it is impossible to avoid the reflection that his European training had failed to teach him one trait on which we pride ourselves, never to abandon a comrade. Few Europeans similarly placed, even if they had been badly treated, would have—*could* have—had the courage to turn back. His indifference, and complete want of feeling in the matter, was a revelation to us of the Chinese character.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Going alone—A game of brag—Schoolboys again—Parting gifts—A passport of respectability—Our canoes—Advantage of commencing from Canton—Our stores—Information gained on West river—Whatever is, is best—Intended route—Letter to Dr. Stewart on parting with Mr. Hong-beng-kaw.

IN the evening, while we were giving orders about the boats, the tin-chai came up and said, "Are you and Mr. Wahab going alone?" I replied, "Yes, of course; as you do not care to come, we *are* going alone!" He then expressed his willingness to go *anywhere* with us. I have no doubt he had been somewhat frightened and was also playing a game of brag with us for still bigger pay; but he also, I think, felt a little ashamed. We were delighted. Though by no means a very educated man, he spoke Mandarin, Cantonese and enough English to make his meaning quite clear on ordinary subjects. Beyond this he was a man of shrewd sense and understood what was wanted of him—a great matter!

After hearing this news C. W. and I indulged ourselves in an evening walk to the Nam-kok-t'ing, the pavilion lying a mile and a half below this. The view from the high hillside skirting the river was very beautiful. The West river wound, serpent-like, through a plain of rich and varied country, with Pe-sê placed on

the promontory formed by the branching of the river. The hills on the north side closed in towards the town; while on the south a high range stood out sharp and rugged against the evening sun. In the west a dim outline of lofty ranges was to be seen, even though the evening was hazy, and at their base we could discover lower ranges again. It was a beautiful scene!

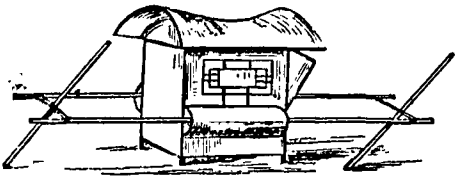
Our serious dilemma over, the dark clouds cast over everything at Pe-sê vanished. We once more felt like schoolboys. I shall never forget the moment when the tin-chai said, "I will go anywhere with you." We had conquered, and from that moment could count on him to stick to us!

The fourteenth of March we spent in preparations for our march. Early in the morning I sent the Prefect and the General each a couple of chairs, one of cane and one a canvas lounge-chair, of English pattern, which we had brought with us from Canton. We thought they might serve as slight mementos of two Englishmen to whom they had shown great courtesy, and on whom they, the Prefect especially, had made a very pleasant impression.

The General called in the afternoon to thank us and bid us good-bye. He told us that he had written to several military mandarins on our route, and to the Viceroy of Yünnan privately, all of them being former comrades of his. He also gave us an itinerary and some valuable information regarding the tribes. His kindness generally had been very great.

The Prefect, if it be possible, capped the General's kindness by sending us two sedan-chairs for use in

Yünnan, of the pattern customary there. It was just what we should have liked best of all things, for we required the chairs to carry our instruments, maps and odds and ends, if not ourselves. We intended to walk every inch, if possible; but a chair is valuable as a passport of respectability, as every man of any position uses a chair.



HILL CHAIR, YÜNNAN.

In the evening our two small boats were alongside our ho-tau, and we had everything ready to make our start the next morning. The boats were mere canoes, covered in with thatch, almost the counterpart of the smaller boats on the rivers of Burmah; but broader and of shallower draught, thus designed in order to pass the rapids. The boatmen were dressed like the Cantonese, but had slightly different features and expression; being less hard and angular, and happier looking. Yet they were very poor and find life not easy, by all accounts.

We found the great advantage of commencing our journey by river, as it enabled us to get our instruments, clothing and stores to a place some eight hundred miles from Canton and on the borders of Yünnan! From Wu-chau we had surveyed over five hundred miles of river. Another advantage was that we were enabled to send back certain instruments which

we found we should not be able to carry, and also odds and ends which we obtained while in the boat.

We intended to commence our land march in the lightest order, carrying with us only our surveying and other instruments, books and maps; a few dozen tins of Kopf's concentrated soup, Liebig, medicines, some changes of clothing, a number of flannel shirts and our Chinese costumes.

Before bidding adieu to Pe-sê, a few words on the West river may be useful. The striking points met with were:—

1. The small areas of cultivable land, compared with the immense area of hilly country. It is *possible* that there may be fertile plains or table-lands, once cultivated, farther from the river and that the horrible destruction of the population during the rebellion is the main cause of the deserted appearance of the country.

2. The small amount of population to the area of the country. Even the whole of the cultivable land, comparatively small as it is, is not taken up.

3. The ruined cities along the river, so often alluded to, which all more or less show signs of past prosperity and former grandeur. The effect of the Taiping and Yünnan Mahomedan wars, disastrous as their influence was in so many ways, has been found not to be the sole reason of the decay of the cities on this grand waterway. The cause seems to have been the diversion of the carrying trade between Yünnan and Canton to the route by the Yang-tze river.

4. From the above, by deduction, the inference

seems probable that Yünnan must have had great wealth and resources, to create and support such a prosperous carrying trade.

5. The character of the people alongside the river banks in Kwang-si is and has been greatly influenced by the aborigines and by intermarriage with them.

6. The existence of many aboriginal tribes close by the river and throughout Kwang-si, still living under their own chiefs.

7. The animosity of the city people (mobs or rabble) is found to be chiefly, if not entirely, due to the literati and partly to the dislike to missionaries, whose influence is hateful to the unemployed literati and in hardly a less degree to the officials.

8. The navigation on the West river might easily, and at no extravagant cost, be vastly improved; but beyond improving the channel at the rapids, making better tow-paths in places and providing them where they do not exist, it is doubtful whether any work for the improvement of navigation on this river would pay under the present rule.

With any Western power governing these regions, the road from Yünnan-fu to Pe-sê (18 days at present) might easily be rendered better and shorter, and the navigation of the river greatly improved. If thorough security to life and property on the river were guaranteed and steamers of light draught, which should ascend some four hundred miles (half way to Pe-sê) placed on it, the traffic would soon increase. It is useless discussing such possibilities as these, seeing that they can never

come to pass under Chinese rule. The policy of the Government is "that of letting things alone," based upon their aphorism, "Whatever is, is best."

It was not without some feeling of emotion that we bade farewell to the West river, with its most beautiful and noble scenery and its ruined cities. We also parted with regret from the boatmen of the ho-tau, with

RAPID ON THE SI-KIANG RIVER, NEAR PE-SÊ.

whom we had learned to sympathise for their simple, childish ways, and to like for their pleasant good-will. The next day we intended to commence our exploration of South-eastern Yünnan, the second portion of our project. Beyond that lay the eastern Laos countries which, we hoped, would form the completing section of our intended exploration.

The first of these regions on our route had never been

trodden by any European and the second only partially; so we were ready to start with renewed energy and interest. Our initial section, the exploration of the Si-kiang or Hsi-ho (West river) to its navigation limit, never before traversed by any European lay traveller, was completed.

Before leaving Pe-sê, I wrote the following letter to the gentleman in Hong-Kong through whom I first made the acquaintance of Mr. Hong-beng-kaw.

"RIVER HSI-HO, PE-SÊ,
"*14th March*, 1882.

"DEAR DR. STEWART,

"I am sorry to say that we have met with a serious disappointment and check in the unwillingness of Mr. Hong-beng-kaw to go on beyond this. His views of the duties of his appointment were very different from mine and the result, after our relations becoming strained, was that Mr. Hong-beng-kaw threw up his appointment just before reaching Pe-sê. I shall not here dwell upon the motives which induced him to act thus, whether I was in fault in my attitude towards him or not. I now write merely to say that he threw up his post of interpreter, and that he returns by the ho-tau which brought us up. As the settlement of our money relations is a difficult one to arrange, we have agreed to refer the matter to you and Mr. Bain of the 'China Mail,' and both of us are willing to abide by your decision. Mr. Hong-beng-kaw has received from me as follows:—

"Advance on pay $100 in Canton before starting, and $80 here for expenses to return to Canton.

"I have also paid his return boat-hire, for the two best rooms in the ho-tau (in which we came), which amounts to the considerable sum of 50 taels, roughly $70.

"I think the arrangement I have made fair and just on my side, and consider the funds placed in Mr. Hong-beng-kaw's hands by me sufficient. He does not consider so, and I record it here at his request.

"Whatever sum, farther and beyond the expenses to which I have been put, may be adjudicated by yourselves, I shall pay to Mr. Hong-beng-kaw, and shall remit the amount adjudged by yourselves, on hearing from you at Rangoon.

"Yours sincerely,

"A. R. COLQUHOUN."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Starting again—Police and military escort—Good-bye—A sylvan scene—Stepping-stones and landing-stages—Wearing the breeches—Brick works—Prosperity of Pe-sê—An airy costume—Red-sandstone cliffs—No poppies—Clearness of water—Pak-chün—Lak-chün—River passing between hills—Character of river-bed—Peen—Feathery bamboos—Joss-house—Cormorants—Miniature Scotch scenery—Windings of the river—All large trees felled along the river—Tiny rafts—Steep rapids—Nan-tsün—Resemblance to Burmese villages—Aboriginal boatmen—Confusion of tongues—Fair people—Silver charms—Chinese love of artificial prudery—Boats for the rapids—Ascending the rapids.

On the 15th of March, at noon, we left Pe-sê, after five days' delay there, longer than we had anticipated. My friend C. W. and I, with all our effects, were safely ensconced in our canoe with our cases and instruments; while the tin-chai and servants, with the food supply to start us on our journey, had another to themselves. The Prefect sent a police-boat, or canoe, to accompany us as far as Pa-oi, which lies some three days' distant to the south-west, on the borders of Yünnan at the foot of the plateau. From that place our march commenced, the ascent beginning immediately at the town.

The General, not content with the Prefect's courteous kindness in providing us with a police-escort, sent a few of his "braves" in almost clean uniform in a separate boat. So altogether we made a most imposing party and, as our little flotilla pushed off, the boatmen of the

ho-tau all crowded to the side to bid us good-bye and wish us a happy journey.

A few minutes took us round the promontory or apex, on which Pe-sê stands, and we then entered a reach of the river presenting a vista of wonderful beauty. The scene was more sylvan than any we had passed. Splendid groups of bamboos, tall and graceful as the most beautiful ever seen by me in the land of the bamboo, Indo-China, and the rich foliage enclosing the numerous hamlets all along the water-edge were relieved by the crimson blossom of the cotton-tree.

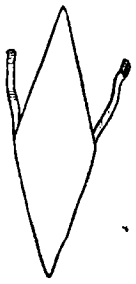
The river, glistening and sparkling over its shingle-bed, came tearing down with a great current, while in the distance could be seen the water leaping with force and violence over the rapids. Nearer there was a three-storied pagoda on the south bank while along the shingle shore, on the northern bank next the town of Pe-sê, a busy scene presented itself.

Here a number of stepping-stones and small landing-stages were erected all along the shore, and people were busily engaged in carrying goods to and from the boats, which are moored in great numbers close to the landing-stages. These are made of planks or bamboos, lashed together and laid on boulders, affording only the most primitive of landings. Still they deserve record, if only as being the first place where we had seen them largely in use. Some dozen boats, similar to the one in which we were travelling, were lying overturned on the strand for cleaning and repair.

The water-edge was crowded by groups of women

and children, chaffering with the market people in the boats or busy washing the family clothes in the stream. The children, chubby, cheerful-looking urchins, were splashing about and looking the picture of happiness. The women, as I had remarked in the town, were fairer and better featured than their sisters of the "painted and pencilled eyebrows," as the young ladies are called in China. Their loose trousers, tucked up above the knee, displayed stout, yet comely limbs which they evidently had no objection to display. Altogether the people of this neighbourhood were physically a better and cheerier race than lower down the river.

On the southern bank, just above the town, and for some few miles further up the river brick, tile and pottery works were numerous and in active operation. The town, as we passed it, offered the same busy air and thriving appearance from this, the south, as we had witnessed on our arrival from the eastern side. Pe-sê, with its crowd of boats from the largest mandarin ho-taus to every sort of smaller craft, the busy boat-building on the beach, the bustling, crowded streets, the well-built houses, hongs and guildhalls and the troops of country people crowding in to market every second day, presented a contrast, as pleasant as it was marked, to the ruined piles of cities left behind. Prosperity was written on its face.



Blue gaiters, made of a strip of cotton and fastened at top and bottom with white cotton tape, are largely worn

by the peasantry, men and boys, whom we saw working in the fields close by.

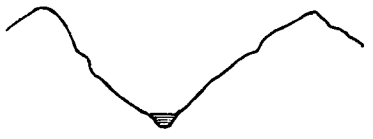
Some of the men hoeing a field presented a curious appearance. Their backs being turned to us, all we could see was a jacket, loosely thrown over the head, and these blue gaiters. They had on trousers, but these, tucked up and twisted into a narrow band round the waist and between the legs, could not be distinguished. The costume, in the noonday sun, was certainly an airy one, but was ceremony itself, as compared with that we were to witness soon after.

For the first three miles above Pe-sê the country, flat next the river, is undulating with rounded knolls on the southern side, but everywhere highly cultivated and beautifully wooded, with villages and hamlets frequently dotted over the plain. At the third mile above the town the river suddenly changes from its westerly direction to almost due south, with a sharp bend. Here the first of a series of precipitous cliffs, in this case rising 150 feet sheer from the river, was met on the south side. This cliff was of red sandstone, with the strata having a dip of 10° to the horizontal.

The north bank, which lies only a few feet above the present river-level and is inundated during the flood-season, was under high cultivation to the water-edge; but neither here nor higher up did we anywhere see the poppy, which was so plentiful lower down the river. The river, still running over gravel and shingle bed, was noticeably clearer than lower down, from carrying less sand with it. Immediately after the cliff the village of

Pak-chün was passed on the left, and soon after that of Lak-chün on the right bank. Between them on the south side is a hamlet, remarkable for two magnificent trees overhanging the river, one dark green and the other of light-coloured foliage.

A mile above this the character of the country completely altered and remained unchanged. The river became encased on both sides by the hills, which slope down on either side to the water-edge.



The hillsides were covered with short, stunted tree-growth; while long grass and bamboo were plentiful on the lower slopes and next the river. The gravel and shingle shoals and banks were now alternated with rocks; rapids became frequent, the fall on these being considerable. After passing a number of hamlets the village of Peen was seen on the south side, situated in a most romantic spot, enclosed at either end by graceful groups of bamboo waving like masses of feathers over the stream.

At the lower end a perfect arcade of bamboo clumps permitted a tiny joss-house to be seen, the site being remarkably well chosen. The red inscriptions at its portal stood out in relief to the green foliage which enclosed it. A dozen small boats were lying at a small piled jetty jutting out from the village bank. On our way we passed a small party of our friends the "cormorant fishers," whom we met before reaching Pe-sê. These men had the identical appearance, most

of them being dressed in the same way, except that a few wore short vests or jackets without arms. The cormorants were sitting in a row, with a Minerva-look on their features.

The river, but for the bamboos and peasants on the banks, had here the appearance of many a Highland mountain stream; only the Scotch facsimile is in miniature. The windings became innumerable and so closed in by hills that even at the slight distance of half a mile, with the aid of a field-glass, it was impossible to distinguish where the river turned. It seemed to end in a *cul-de-sac*—so perfect, that it was hard to believe there could be any exit!

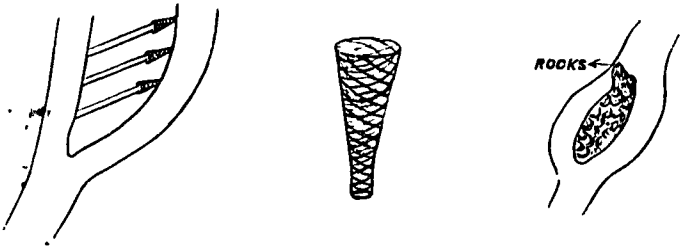
We noticed now that the hills were more clad with timber, though still of very poor quality; but good forests do exist (as is proved by the excellent timber to be found in several villages we had visited) some distance from the river. All the large trees near it have been cut down. Serpentine tracks, blackened by the fire-blaze, are seen traced over the hillsides everywhere, and many hamlets are built upon the slopes.

Several tiny bamboo-rafts were passed to-day, most of them having an old lady crouching in front and a lad steering at the stern. The ends were only a few inches above the water, while the centre of the rafts was not visible. A couple of large earthen pots, doubtless containing the day's supply of rice, were noticed on each raft.

The rapids became worse as we ascended. Just above one we noticed a brick-field, and below it a large

stack of bricks, about three hundred yards apart; the bricks being carried this long distance to avoid the rapid close by.

In the shingle shoals we saw fishermen at work. They had constructed small channels through the shoal. Long creels were placed at the upper end of the channels to catch the fish in ascent. The creels, which were made of bamboo interlaced, were shaped as shown below.

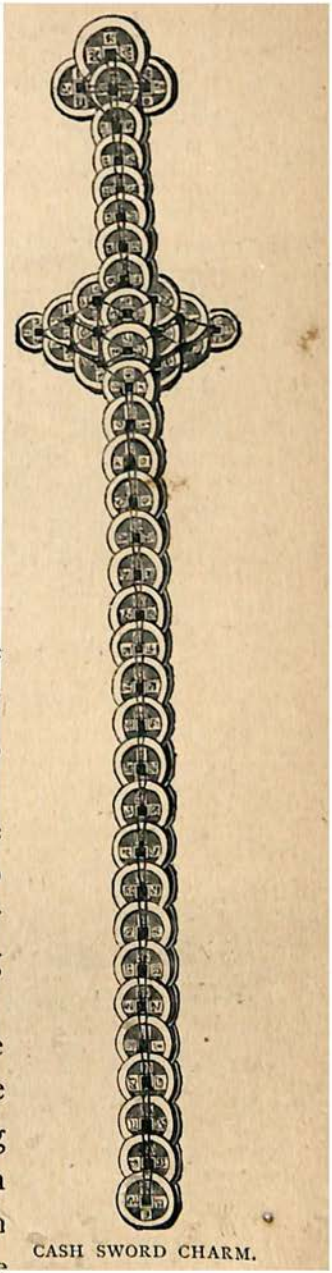


The river-level, on two sides of one of these shoals, in places varied as much as three feet, owing to the rocks on the side above forming a sort of weir, and thus throwing an increased volume down that arm.

In the evening we halted at the small village of Nan-tsün, on the north bank, and took a stroll round about. It greatly resembled the villages to be seen in Burmah or the Laos countries; the houses being mostly of bamboo, with small verandahs in front, and raised on bamboo piles. We dined early, and by half-past eight o'clock I had unrolled my bedding, and lain down to smoke quietly before going to sleep.

Our canoe being of very modest dimensions, and having a number of things strewn about, our space was rather limited, which was further lessened by a couple of

our young boatmen being just behind me. They rolled themselves both up in one quilt, and, after vainly trying to talk to me for a few minutes, tucked themselves in and were asleep in two minutes. Our crew, who belonged to one of the many subdued aboriginal races in this neighbourhood, were fine, frank, simple young fellows, with particularly pleasing faces. During the day, according to our custom, we had made advances towards a friendly footing, which were received rather shyly. It was rather trying to find "the engineer hoist with his own petard." The tin-chai being asleep, when they made advances in the way of conversation, I was unable to reciprocate. The men were lighter made than our Cantonese boatmen, but lithe, clean-built, with no fat about them. They were very fair and had brown hair, notwithstanding their constant exposure to the sun.



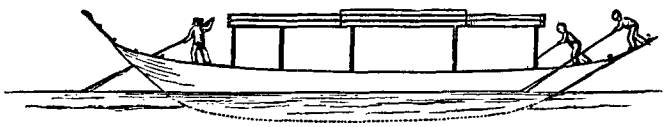
CASH SWORD CHARM.

Some lads in the police canoe, we noticed, wore silver bands round the neck. When we enquired regarding this, we were told that they were worn as charms. In one case they had been given by a fond mother to preserve her son from sickness, he having been weakly when a

boy. Many wore silver bangles or bracelets, of various sorts. The tin-chai, of course, in common with his countrymen, looked down upon these people with thorough contempt. They were savages, and all their customs were ludicrous. The Chinese opinion of the aboriginal ladies is by no means a high one; and we have heard numerous stories of the far from rigid code of morals with which they are credited.

I should be inclined to accept with great caution anything they say in such a matter. They think poorly of these poor women, because they are free and unsophisticated in their manner. The fact is, they have no high opinion of any foreign women, because they are wanting in the quality called modesty in their country, but which we would call sickly, artificial prudery!

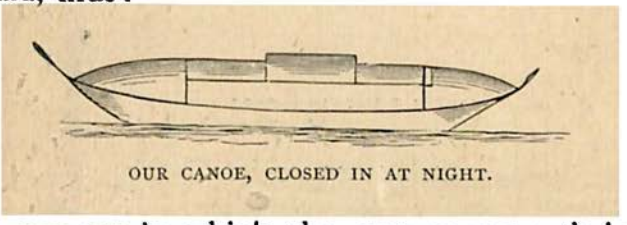
The boats above Pe-sê are specially built to pass the rapids, and are made of some durable and elastic wood, which must be very strong, judging from the manner in which they stand bumping against the rocks and shingle bed. Their draught limit is 12 inches, but ours is 9. They are made to rise in bow and stern, in order that the steersmen may see over the roof well ahead,—a necessity on the furious rapids.



OUR CANOE, DURING DAY.

The incline in the bow is to allow the men a sloped plane on which to rush down when poling. The

roofs are in three sections and telescopic; they can be drawn out so as to enclose the whole boat at night, as we did, thus:



OUR CANOE, CLOSED IN AT NIGHT.

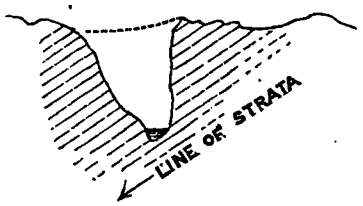
The manner in which the men manage their boats is beyond praise. They worked from 6 o'clock in the morning till 5 o'clock in the evening; and with wonderful dexterity and agility change from tracking to rowing, or poling to lifting, or hauling the boat, whenever necessary. In making the ascent of a rapid they charge it, and get carried away to the smoother side, and then crawl up by pulling on a rope, or hauling in the water.

PO-TEOU-LAO (NEAR TONQUIN FRONTIER IN KWANGSI).

CHAPTER XXXVII.

A driving mist—An overhanging bluff—Tung-tsün—Frequency of rapids—A paper procession—Whatever is strange, is ludicrous—Paper money for the dead—Eating the sacrifices—Erection, and burning, of paper houses.—The firewood flower "Ho-hau"—Aboriginal dress—Comrades to the rescue—The worst rapid—Sorcerers from Tonquin—Eating cold rice—Sans culotte—A night watch—Forced labour—A vision of beauty—Our morning star—Pa-oi—A military mandarin—Lodgings in joss-houses—Filthy dens—Description of joss-house—Difficulties in procuring transport—Carriage of rice—Heavy pay—Our procession—Beautiful panoramas—Fever—Bearing up.

WE started next morning in a driving mist, which made it a difficult matter to recognise the banks of the river. A fresh breeze helped us along, and enabled us to cover a day and a half's journey in one. Early in the morning we passed an overhanging bluff, rising some 400 feet above the water on the north bank; and some five miles further another, 500 feet high. They were magnificent precipitous cliffs formed by the river cutting through the hill.



Close above Tung-tsün, which we passed early on the north bank, the first of a series of rapids, much worse than those we passed below Pe-sê, was encountered. These rapids now became so frequent that they might be said to occur at each reach in the river. Between

this and Pa-oi, the point where our march was to commence and where transport was procurable, we passed some fifty bad ones at least, not counting the smaller. Their character may perhaps be best realised by the fact that we have ascended on the river roughly about five hundred feet since leaving Pe-sê, a distance of not much more than thirty miles! This is in contrast to the seven hundred miles below Pe-sê, which only registered a rise of almost exactly the same amount.

On the south bank we passed a curious spectacle, namely the figure of a horse, ready saddled and bridled, held by a man, both made on a frame of bamboo work in paper. Alongside was a sedan-chair of the same material, and a number of banners, all rudely coloured and of the most execrable execution. They were part of a funeral ceremony. The figures were to be burned a few days later on. The tin-chai, although he laughed at this as not being his custom (the Cantonese), saw nothing ludicrous in all the ceremonies which take place at the usual Chinese interment.

Amongst the many absurd traits of their customs one is to scatter paper money before the funeral procession, in order to purchase the friendliness of wandering spirits. Crackers are fired, libations offered, and papers folded into the shape of houses, horses, clothes and money; in fact everything which the deceased may find useful in spirit-land is burned. With that true economical spirit which distinguishes the Chinese, they take away and often feast on the sacrifice which they have made!

The tin-chai told us, with reference to this, that he

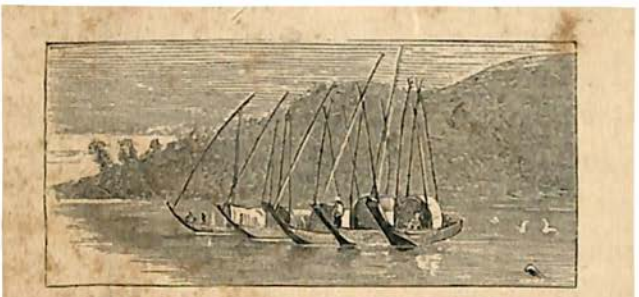
had known cases where house, furniture, horses, and other goods were built and imitated in paper, and then burnt; but they usually counterfeit them in the less costly form of folded papers. The red "fire-wood flower" before mentioned as occurring below Pe-sê was here seen in great abundance on the hillsides, brightening up the dull green background.

In the afternoon we passed the village of Ho-hau, where a small joss-house stands under the shade of two large trees on the north bank, just opposite a bad rapid of four feet fall. Here we noticed a boat with some aboriginal women, dressed in tight jackets, so short as to expose a small portion of the waist. They wore dark blue cotton turbans, jackets, and petticoats.

The boats descending these rapids, shoot them at a tremendous pace, and are managed by the steersmen with unfailing skill. Soon after struggling up a 3- and 6-foot rapid, we came to and surmounted the worst one on the river up to Pa-oi (above which the boats, such as we are now using, cannot ascend). Here there is a sharp bend in the river; on the south side is a wall of rock, on the other a boulder shoal.

The water tears down this rapid, which has about eight feet fall, with a force and violence which we had not before witnessed. The boats cannot ascend the natural channel. A cut has therefore been made by excavating a channel through the boulders, up which the canoes are dragged. Even this was effected with difficulty; every man in the flotilla, now some eight in number, taking the different boats up in turn. A

certain number had to gather at the foot of the rapid before it could be ascended, as it is impossible without mutual assistance to effect the ascent.



A FLEET OF CANOES ANCHORED NEAR RAPID.

Wonderful stories were told us by the tin-chai of the powers of sorcery reported to be common among the aboriginal people, who come from the south, next the Giao-chi or Tonquin border—several of his anecdotes of witchcraft and magic power being so absurdly childish as not to warrant repetition.

Our crew ate cold rice, drank cold water, two evidences to the Chinese of their savagery. What seems a stronger proof of their want of civilisation was the fact that, nearly the whole day, our boatmen were without a stitch of clothing except their small jackets tucked up under their collars. Even these they dispensed with on several occasions.

It seems astonishing that a race, seemingly so superior, should be so completely without shame, for they evidently thought nothing of it. There was no *mauvaise honte*, as they threw their clothing off, and they went naked not only in the water but in the boat. In the evening we anchored close to a small hamlet, and had

a guard of some fifteen men from the village, during the night on the bank. Corvée labour was evidently in force here, and no Mandarin tax (as the Government tax is here called) was paid, but labour and supplies were given to the mandarins.

In the morning we passed a succession of rapids. The river since we left Pe-sê had an average width of 150 yards, sometimes contracting to 100, and broadening out to a quarter of a mile. At a hamlet where we stopped, to allow the men to eat their rice, some village children came down, and soon after two girls, with *dhas* or knives on the left, and small baskets on the right side, attached to their belts. They wore turbans, with a fold falling down in a broad width behind, short jackets and petticoats of blue cotton. One of them was a charming girl of sixteen or eighteen, graceful as a fawn, and with an English face! Her smile was pleasantly bright and cheery, but her voice, "that most excellent thing in woman," was better than all! She watched us carefully, and seemed highly amused. A few minutes and this vision of beauty stepped on to a small bamboo raft, with her companion, and paddled rapidly across the river. She had gone, but her voice was heard by us, like some pure bell, sounding its silver music from the hillside. Truly, if there be many such, I should prefer vastly being a savage to a civilised Chinaman!

We reached Pa-oi, after passing several villages, at

ten o'clock. The place lies on the south bank of the river, perched up on high stone foundations or wooden piles, to protect it against the fierce floods. It is about one-tenth the size of Pe-sê, and of little importance, beyond being one of the two transit towns between the latter and Yünnan.

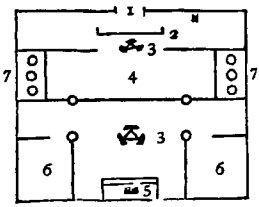
The principal route is north of Pe-sê, close to a place called Hsi-ling, some four days distant from Pe-sê. We made immediate inquiries for baggage, animals, and coolies, and were told that none could be had under two days, even though the Prefect had given notice by a messenger of our arrival. However, we did not despair, but sent our cards to the military mandarin in charge of the police asking him to assist us, if possible. The result was, that an hour later we received a visit from this gentleman, who turned out to be a stout, and not very prepossessing petty officer. He would see that the required amount of ponies and coolies was ready next morning.

We took up our lodgings in a joss-house, on the south side of the town, in a retired position, and found it very airy and comfortable. It seemed so curious to find ourselves ensconced in a temple, with our beds and baggage on either side of the main building, while we partook of our slender meal at the table in front of the shrine. This custom of using temples as caravanserais is general with the mandarins and richer Chinese; and improper, or strange, as it at first strikes one, it very soon ceases to have any novelty. The custom of thus providing shelter for the wayfarer is an admirable one,

but it is only available for the rich, as you must have your own servants, food, and bedding.

The poor are compelled to rest in the local inn, which is to be found at certain stages, convenient for transport purposes, along each route of any importance. These places are generally miserable, filthy dens, where man and beast are huddled together. The one at Pa-oi was, according to the tin-chai's account, uninhabitable. After an inspection, he said, with an exclamation of disgust, "*I* could not stay there; I would rather remain outside!"

In the joss-house we had ample space to strew our baggage about; and with our Chinese quilts, laid on some planks across trestles, had beds which were everything desirable. The joss-house was of the usual pattern, built of brick. In the main room, in front of the shrine were two large Chinese lamps and six paper lanterns, gorgeously coloured with fantastic designs. The room was decorated with some dozen banners, inscribed in gilt letters, as usual; and with the lamps, presented quite a gay scene. The side of the courtyard had a number of flowers in pots, while a small garden, only a few yards in width, stood at the back of the building.



1. Door. 2. Screen.
3. Tripod. 4. Courtyard.
5. Shrine. 6. Rooms.
7. Flower-pots.

We were up betimes, but to find no symptom of either ponies or coolies; although the official had laid great stress, the evening before, upon our making an early start! The time wore on till half-past eight

o'clock, and no sign of man or beast. It was not until I had sent another message to the headman of the village, who was to have arranged the transport, that he and the petty mandarin appeared.

With them came some of the required means of transport, but by no means all. When everything was nearly arranged, they again disappeared; and, notwithstanding the threats and entreaties of the mandarin, could not be got to return. At last (probably owing to

SANG CHING, THE THREE PURE ONES.

the fact, that it was impressed on them, that English mandarins always *paid*) arrangements were made, and at forty minutes past nine o'clock we got away.

Even then our difficulties were not over. We had no sooner started than they halted, first to get food, then clothes, and lastly, as we passed out of the southern gate, to eat their food! This consisted of rice, carried in small packets, enclosed in leaf, which had been closely pressed. It resembled the glutinous rice used by the

Karens in Burmah, and the Laos or Shan people; which is called "kouk-hnien" in Burmah, and usually carried by the last mentioned people in bamboos, into the hollow of which it is pressed. The Karens sometimes carry it in a plaintain or other leaf, and occasionally in bamboos.

We had to listen to their entreaty to be allowed to eat at the gate, whilst a garrulous old Chinese lady, the coolie headman's wife, was giving each man a strip of Chinese paper with some characters on it, as tallies. I promised to let them eat after the first ascent; and, *at last* we got away in real earnest, and commenced our ascent of the bare, red-coloured hill-side in a fierce blazing sun, with the prospect of a long march before us!

I had been most anxious to start early, knowing how important it is to avoid fatiguing the men at the outset, not to speak of ourselves. Our men were so little enamoured of exploration work, even at three times the Canton rate of pay and everything provided, that I felt very anxious regarding them for the first few days. No doubt all the difficulty about getting the transport was simply the result of the mandarin, our obese young friend at Pa-oi, never paying the coolies anything when they worked for him! Of course all sorts of other pretexts were given, of which we could not believe one word. My experience of the Asiatic coolie is that, —simple soul,—he always goes with a burden, *if paid.*

As we slowly ascended the tortuous hill-roadway which skirts one branch of the West river, now a turbu-

lent hill-stream, our caravan presented a most imposing appearance, not without its grotesque side. First came six baggage-ponies, carrying cases of stores, medicines and instruments; then some dozen coolies, conveying loads; the cook and boy followed on ponies, with their knees making close advances to their chins. After them followed the tin-chai, now no longer a messenger but a full-blown interpreter, and by reason of his altered position, on an improvised bamboo mountain chair, looking very consequential. Last came our two chairs, the Prefect's gift, with our money-box, some of our instruments, teapot and odds and ends; and then ourselves on foot. To march on foot is a great reproach, but we saved ourselves from complete disrepute, by sporting the chairs, if we did not actually sit in them.

We had some beautiful panoramas in crossing the hills from Pa-oi. A view of one large valley reminded me strongly, though of course on a smaller scale, of the Rhone valley where Brieg lies in the centre. The stream, the village and the hills, in their situation were like the Swiss scene, but the Simplon, with its snow-clad summit, was wanting, to give the air of grandeur to the landscape.

A touch of fever, which I had overnight at Pa-oi, did not prepare me for the severe walk which we were to undergo; and I started with my head feeling as if I could not march, and was unable all the time to tell any one of my condition.

Sickness in the leader of any expedition is a dangerous thing and unpardonable. I had suffered terribly

from bad forms of jungle fever in Burmah, and feared this enemy more than anything else we were likely to encounter. It is one of the hard tasks one has to undergo,—to assume a cheerful face and an energetic gait, when your head is splitting, your heart is sinking within you, and your legs can hardly be compelled to drag along.

METHOD OF TRAVEL FOR MANDARINS.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Halt for refreshments—Chinese slab-causeways—Difficult progression—Aboriginal beauties—Kwei-jen—A sketch—Picturesque costume—A trying march—Chay-song—A salutation—A primitive bridge—The plague at Chay-song—A day's rest—Delay—Procuring carriage—Starting with swagger—Humouring our suite—Necessity of travelling lightly—My secret intention—A pleasant march—Swiss scenery—Caravan adornments—Clever mules.

AFTER skirting the stream for some miles, we crossed it Some four miles from Pa-oi; and soon after reached the first halting-place, where tea and rice-water were being sold to the passing coolies. We tried the tea, and relished it after our exertion, though it was of the coarsest quality. From the causeway there is a series of massive stone steps leading up to the stage. A fine old tree on the stream side has been protected, at its base, by stonework, which "underpins" it, not to save the tree, I fancy, but to guard the roadway against the violence of the stream.

The road from here to the end of the day continued ascending and descending, in the most provoking manner. We observed small valleys lying on one or the other side of the road, here and there small patches of cultivation, and hamlets of the poorest description. The road is tolerably well aligned, but in execrable order. It was constructed by forced labour originally,

when the country was first conquered by the Chinese. Slabs of stone were laid as pavement wherever necessary. The amount of labour must have been enormous. The blocks of stone had been worn round, and now presented to the foot-traveller, or beast of burden, the unpleasant opportunity for showing his agility in making his way from one to the other of the series.

Our march for the first day, a distance of twenty-four miles through the blazing sun, consisted of this sort of walking. The stones were varied by enormous ruts, from which it was a matter of difficulty to extricate oneself for the next step. A Chinese highway has been likened to "a London street with the pavement up"; but the simile is a complimentary one to the Chinese road, if our route to Kwang-nan be a fair example!

At one o'clock we halted for half an hour, to give all a rest, to water the animals, and to have some tea and a smoke. We were very hungry, and devoured some Chinese biscuits with keen relish; and C. W., on the principle that an empty stomach knows no ceremony, emptied a bowl of *conjee*, and pronounced it delicious!

While seated, and just as the men were starting, a group of women belonging to a tribe called Kwei-jen came up, and stood under the shelter of the portico opposite me. I had stayed behind to carry on the survey, finding it best to allow the men to go on ahead, as one can trace the direction of the road, seeing them bobbing up in the distance every now and then. The women were dressed in dark-blue cotton, which was not

unbecoming. They were good-looking, fair and had brownish hair. One girl of the group resembled somewhat the fair creature we had seen two days before, on the river bank. She was decidedly pretty, and would have been pronounced so anywhere.

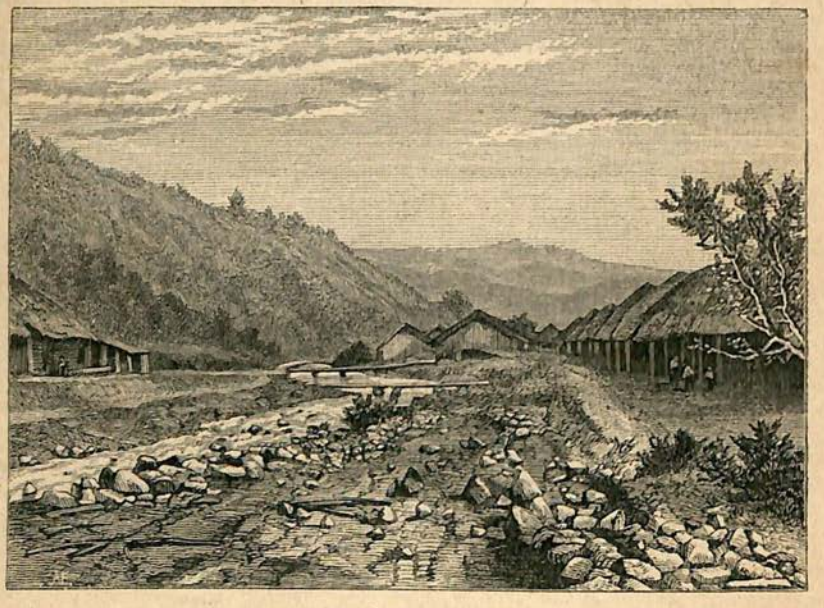
I made use of the opportunity to sketch one rapidly, as she stood in a graceful attitude, with one hand raised and leaning against a bamboo post; but, before I had completed it, the people behind me warned her laughingly, and she fled into the house amidst a peal of boisterous laughter. All the ladies, however, with the curiosity with which rumour usually accredits them, soon after gathered at my back, and my fair subject for the pencil amongst them. I showed her the sketch, making a sign to tell her whose the portrait was, which created much amusement.

The women were dressed in a large turban of ample folds, hanging down behind, as head-gear, a short jacket with rather tight sleeves—never met with in Chinese costume—on which was a white border, half an inch wide round the neck, and a 2-inch border of the same colour round the edge of the sleeves. The jacket was short and met the petticoat, which reached halfway from the knee to the ankle, and was, in some cases, tucked up in front, displaying a pair of white trousers underneath. Their feet were unshod.

After a weary march we halted for a few minutes at four o'clock, and then crawled on until we reached our destination, Chay-song, at half-past six, all our party being thoroughly tired. This was a most unfavour-

able beginning; the trying march in the great heat had been too much for us, and we had to call a halt the next day, as the servants were quite done up.

Chay-song is a small village, depending more on passing traders than on the small amount of cultivation around it. It boasts no official, but there was a very polite headman, who came and knocked his head on



VIEW AT CHAY-SONG.

the ground before us, although our appearance must have been strongly at variance with any preconceived idea of his as to our greatness or consequence! Our quarters were again in a joss-house, close by a hill stream flowing past the village. From there we had a pleasant view of the one village road and the stream, which is spanned by a rough bamboo bridge, sup-

ported on gabions loaded with boulders, a primitive affair which has to be renewed every year.

The unhealthiness of Pe-sê was confirmed here by the headman, who bore witness to the manner in which people from the highlands close by suffered when they went down to that town.

It is not improbable, indeed quite the reverse, that the water of Pe-sê (coming, as it does, down one of the streams which form the West river, and which pass through limestone ranges) has a great deal to do with the sickness, said to be so prevalent at certain seasons. Yet the local people, even the Cantonese who have settled there, do not suffer in anything like the same degree as the hill people do who descend to Pe-sê.

The reason may probably be that the highlanders, coming from a bracing and at times cold atmosphere, find the air humid and enervating, and the heat oppressive. Unaccustomed to this, they throw off the heavy clothing, which they are accustomed to wear, and allow themselves, whilst bathed in perspiration, to catch a chill. Anyhow, most places situated as Pe-sê is are unhealthy. The people of Chay-song during the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 7th, 8th and 9th months of the year are said to suffer from a species of boils, so virulent as to be generally fatal to all but those of the strongest constitution. We wondered if this could be the plague.

At Chay-song, and on our journey to it, we encountered a number of caravans, usually consisting of from a dozen to twenty mules. One of them included fully one hundred.

On the 19th of March we halted at Chay-song, to recruit our party and get coolies, and we spent the day in resting and having a bath in the rocky stream close by. The joss-house we stayed in was built on a foundation of boulders, the plinth for two feet being of the same material. The village consists chiefly of long rows of poor men's dwellings, on either side of the main street, which skirts the stream.

The next morning, having got all our baggage ready over-night, we had great difficulty in making the men start, and had a repetition of the Pa-oi episode, on a slightly less troublesome scale. The delays in land travel in this part of China, when you have not got your own men or animals, are indescribably vexatious, and wear you out before the day commences.

Nearly all the carrying is done by regular caravans, which are hired by traders from time to time. None were to be had at the time of our start, and we (being unable to remain a week or more, on the chance of the arrival of a caravan) had to make shift with a motley company of animals and porters, gathered from the villages through which we passed.

At each daily halt we had to renew our transport and pay off the old. This took up much time and gave us endless trouble. We therefore determined, as soon as possible, to try to secure our own transport, as far as feasible. We should thus be able to get away early, and accomplish a portion of the day's march before the sun was at its highest, blazing down upon us.

This we had been hitherto unable to accomplish, and the sun had therefore told heavily on the servants and the interpreter, as well as on ourselves.

We had started with an amount of swagger—the interpreter (late messenger) with his chair, and the cook and boy with their ponies—that was not warranted by the state of our purse or my inclination; but, even with such luxurious accommodation, it was with difficulty that we had got them to start at all, and we had been obliged to indulge their humour.

It was necessary to be as "prudent and discreet in all things," as Marco Polo, the master-traveller, had been. Discretion made us grant *them* riding animals and a chair, which prudence would not allow *us* to indulge in, as I knew our purse could not possibly cover such expense. The men were pleased enough with their new playthings, but they little knew, whilst trying to assume the airs of petty mandarins, what was in store for them some weeks later!

I soon found that the success of travel in these parts depended greatly on the lightness of the baggage and the unpretentiousness of your mode of travel; and I resolved to contract our conveyance, as soon as prudence would permit, to a few baggage animals for carriage, and one chair, the latter only for the appearance of rank which it gives one. The servants would then have either to walk, or manage with an occasional lift on one of the baggage horses or mules. The tin-chai might perhaps still have his chair, except on entering towns. There, of course, we should have to make the

most of our resources, one of us taking the chair, the other riding one of the ponies. This programme, which I sketched out for inauguration so soon as I considered the servants could not leave us, I mentioned to no one, and thus, on leaving, we formed a procession infinitely more imposing and correspondingly costly than I had ever anticipated.

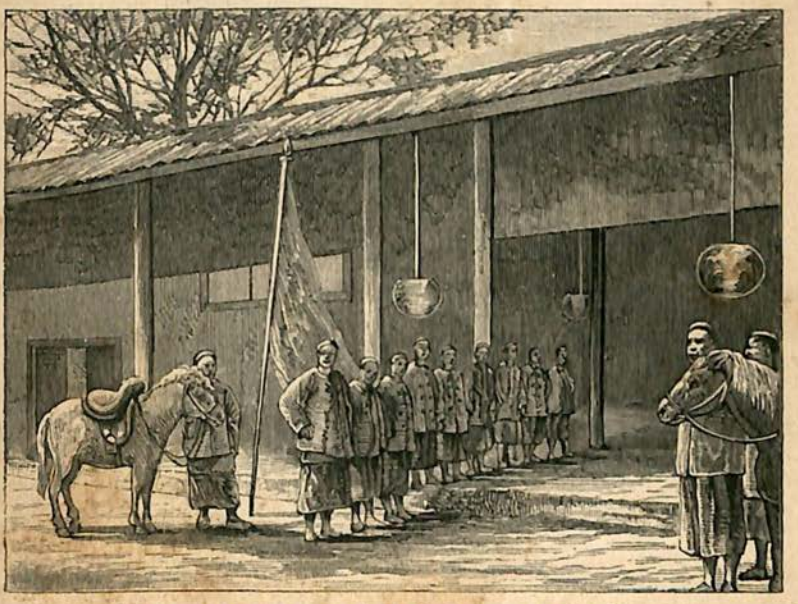
Our next march was much cooler than the one from Pa-oi. A pleasant breeze, which had not refreshed us hitherto, made the journey more bearable, and our twenty miles' march was really enjoyable, though the road partook of the same character as on the first day, and still made the progression at times a series of gymnastic exercises. Much of the scenery we passed through reminded us of Switzerland. The hamlets nestling on the hillsides, the streams with their rocky beds and banks, and the tinkling of the mule and horse bells, lent quite an alpine air to the country we were passing through.

The caravans which we met had the first mule, or first two animals, ornamented with red-braided head-gear.

and red plumes, fastened on both sides next the shoulders. Blue beads adorned the harness behind. The others had tiny bells instead of beads.

The mules are all clever at picking their way from stone to stone, or when proceeding over deeply-rutted ground. But the leader's intelligence is surprising; he not only knows the road perfectly, but seems to be entirely under control of his owner.

On this march I noticed the teak tree for the first time; two of the trees, about five feet high, were growing on the side of the track.



ENTRANCE TO GENERAL'S YAMEN AT PE-SÊ.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Road in the stream-bed—Fine view at head of gorge—Kuei-chau—A shy child—A burnt country—Foot-sore—Sans ceremony—Salt—The Grosvenor Mission—Our bargain with a caravan—A mountain stream—Effects of the Mussulman rebellion—Four Hebes—Presents—Advice as to their choice—Aggrieved ladies—Teaching geography—Good-natured curiosity—Underclothing—A troublesome cock—An hereditary governor—A sop for Cerberus.

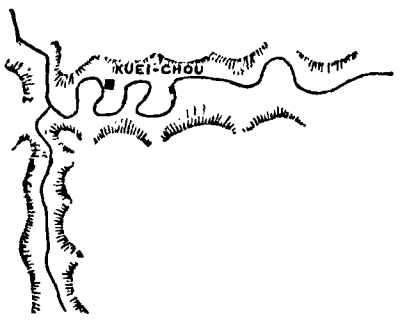
FOR the first portion of the day we kept skirting the left bank of the stream, then crossed and recrossed it, and finally proceeded up the dry bed until, about nine miles from Chay-song, we came to the summit of the valley. A few miles farther, at the head of a long valley, we reached an exceedingly steep gorge. From this point a magnificent view of the valley, some ten miles long, was obtained, and Kuei-chau, a town of some size and importance, was seen in the distance.

There is a stage at the summit, where we halted for the men and ourselves to have some food. The children who crowded round us were very fair and chubby creatures. One I tried to make friends with, and offered her a lead-pencil as a souvenir; but she was too shy and ran away, so I gave it to an old lady standing by, asking her to give it to the little child.

During the descent, whilst winding down the hill-sides, a "black country" was entered, whose wildness

and barrenness was remarkable. The hillsides, from top to bottom, were blazed by fire, and this gave it the jet-black appearance which made it so desolate looking. The lower portion of the valley opened out and, though hardly cultivated anywhere, had a pleasant look after the bare hills left behind.

A couple of miles above Kuei-chau, the stream which we had been skirting is crossed close to its junction with the main-stream, on which the town is situated. Turning a spur of the hill, on the opposite side of the valley to the one we had been descending, we came upon a cultivated valley, about a mile in width, of great beauty with a lovely rocky stream winding through it. Crossing the stream, the town was reached by us, after passing over a fragile and rickety bamboo bridge, on stone-weighted gabions.



We approached the town footsore and in a sorry condition, looking anything but the high and mighty mandarins which we found, on our arrival, report had converted us into. The town lies most picturesquely situated, built tier upon tier up the side of a lofty and precipitous mountain. It is approached from the river by means of a succession of fine stone steps and archways. As we entered, we were met by some subordinates of the local mandarin in official uniform. Our servants had gone on ahead, and left us to make our entrance in

this sorry and undignified manner. We found them ensconced in a fine, substantial building, which we took to be a joss-house—as it resembled one in every particular. It, however, turned out to be the Canton guild-house or club.

At the bottom of the valley, before reaching Kuei-chau, we had encountered a party of some four horsemen and nine ponies, forming a small caravan carrying salt to a place called Fu-chau, some two days' distant beyond Kuei-chau. The tin-chai, who was ahead, had entered into a long conversation with them, and we discovered that they belonged to Kwang-nan-fu, a place six days farther on our route. They had been to Tali-fu and Puerh-fu; and at Tali, some six years ago, at the large annual fair held there, had seen several Englishmen who, they said, were somewhat like myself. These I conjecture to have been the members of the Grosvenor Mission, who passed through Tali in 1876.

These men expressed their willingness to accompany us to Puerh or anywhere. Anxious as I was to secure just such a small party, I knew it to be wise to simulate an indifference, which I did not feel, about securing them, and said, if they offered to engage on moderate terms, that we *might* come to terms. They were going to Kwei-chau, and so I asked them to let me know their rate, in the evening.

Soon after we had settled down in the guild-house (where a large crowd of men, women and children had gathered, even before we arrived), the caravan men paid us a visit, and expressed themselves willing to engage at

double the usual terms of Yünnan, which I had inquired about on the road. I quietly told them not to waste their own time and mine, and sent them away.

In a short time they came back, and asked how much I was willing to give. I named the terms that I considered sufficient, which they said they could not accept, as provisions and fodder were scarce. Later in the evening, when we were preparing for bed, they returned and accepted my offer. I bound them down to carry our things as far as Lin-an-fu, which lies in the centre of the southern portion of Yünnan, a distance of sixteen long day stages. The route was to take us through Kwang-nan, which is some six days from Kuei-chau, and thence ten days to Lin-an-fu.

The rate was the usual one, equivalent to about half a dollar per day for each horse, there being nine of the latter. The payment was to be made in stamped sycee silver which, luckily, I had brought, and which I recommend to every traveller in the south, and I should think also in the north of Yünnan. It was the best bargain I could make, and, although the number of animals was rather more than I wanted, they would not accept any offer, except for the whole of their little caravan.

A few villages and some hamlets are scattered about the vicinity of Kuei-chau. The stream on which it stands is a most beautiful one, and exhibits in its character all the features of the upper portion of the West river. As we looked down on it, we could see numberless windings, the shingle shoals, and the rocks forming tiny rapids here and there, while the waters contracted

at times and flowed through rocky gorges. In other places the hills closed in, just as we had seen on the river we had left.

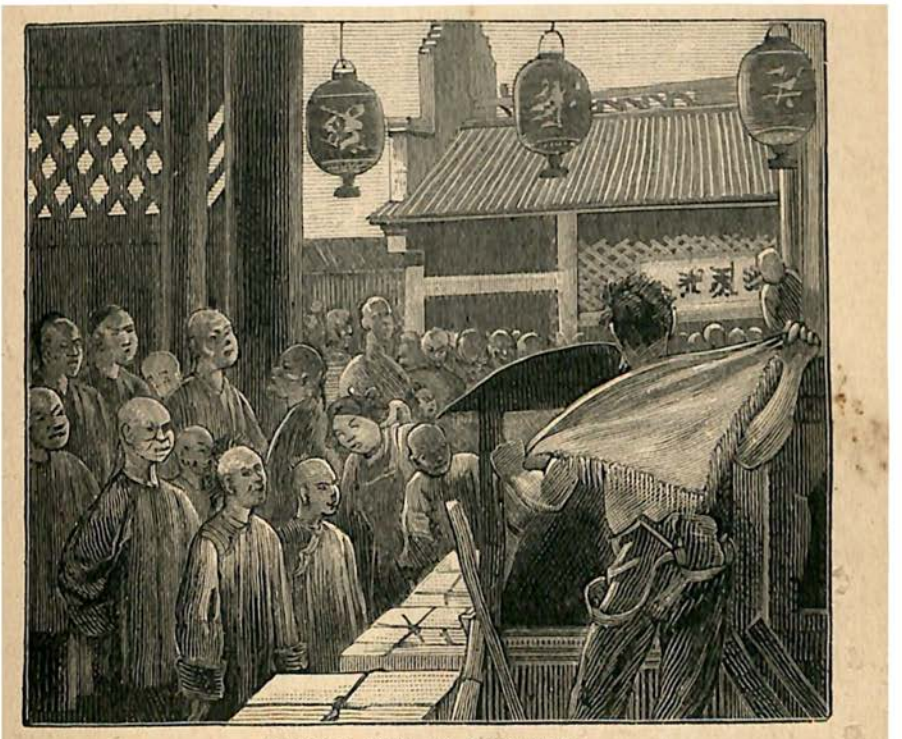
Near the stream masses of trees, with beautiful foliage, crept down to the water, and gave the neighbouring land a cultivated air amidst the wild mountain scenery seen on every side. The town itself showed sad signs of the terrible destruction which it suffered during the Mussulman rebellion in its battered outlying walls, ruined temples, houses and official yamens. Even the head mandarin's yamen had not yet been quite rebuilt. The town had not recovered its former importance.

The local official in charge sent us in the evening a present of four platters—some pork, a fowl, a duck and two bottles of samshoo. These were brought to us by four *women*, which showed, more than anything else, how un-Chinese, and how original or aboriginal, a country we were in. The mandarin expressed his regret that he could not call on us that day, as he had just returned from a pilgrimage to some local deity's joss-house. He hoped to call early the next day.

In return for the provender he had forwarded, we sent such gifts as we could—a small telescope, some medicines, especially a bottle of quinine which we understood would be pleasing to him—and he was greatly delighted with them. This present-giving is very expensive and a heavy tax on the traveller, who, in return for a dollar's worth of poultry, has to present some gifts of considerably more value. Petty gifts are worse than useless,—they would be considered trivial. Again, instruments,

such as compasses, telescopes and thermometers, which can be easily carried, are not understood or valued. The whole question of present-giving is one of great difficulty. Perhaps cigarettes, got up in silver and gilt envelopes, are the most highly prized.

We had an immense crowd in the court-yard and on the steps all the evening, and every now and then the people surged in and spread all over our rooms. Even during bathing they were not to be denied and



EVENING BATH AT KUEI-CHAU.

the ladies looked fairly aggrieved when we constructed a barricade of the sedan-chairs and some plaids, to hide our operations! C. W. however, in his Chinese costume,

fairly bore off the palm from me, even when I was tubbing, and I felt quite an "unconsidered trifle" for the time.

Our survey-books and C. W.'s sketch-book were overhauled, and handed round amongst the crowd, nilly-willy; and until late at night I had, while lying on my bed, to explain the local topography on my map of Yünnan, until I was sick of repeating my alphabet of Kuei-chau, Kwang-nan, Yünnan-fu and so on, and literally I almost fell asleep, pointing mechanically to *any* spot on the map, and repeating this fascinating formula to them. This naive inquisitiveness was not disagreeable, like the curiosity we had encountered before entering Yünnan; it was gentle and good-natured, and did not transgress the bounds of courtesy. The men were better-looking than we had seen hitherto, and the women fairer, with brown hair. The lasses were merry, good-natured looking, strapping and buxom. Most of them wore their hair gathered together behind, and bound in one large tress round the forehead—a becoming coiffure.

They wore silver necklaces, which nearly met in front, raised on both sides, with a plain surface between.

Many of them were dressed in the same fashion as the young ladies we had seen at one of the stages, soon after making our first ascent of the Yünnan plateau, but in better material.

They had all dark blue turbans (some two inches deep) bound round the head, silver and gold earrings, jackets fastened by two round silver buttons at the

neck, and three similar ones over the right breast. The petticoat was in thick folds and hid the trousers, except when tucked up in front. To relieve the dark dress a border, usually of bright blue and in some cases white, one inch broad round the top of the jacket and two inches broad round the sleeves, was worn. They had also silver bangles and bracelets.

Their feet, usually unshod, were, in the case of some, covered by loose shoes and stockings, most ungraceful and untidy looking articles of dress, the only unbecoming article of an otherwise effective costume. As to underclothing, I cannot speak with authority,—but rumour credits them with none!

The agreement with the head of our caravan was drawn out, and ready to be witnessed next morning in the mandarin's court. At last, at a most dissipated hour for the simple Kuei-chau people, we got to bed, but had little sleep, owing to the late hour at which we had retired and to the fact that a cock, which the mandarin wished to send by one of our escort to Kwang-nan, crew the whole night through!

Early next morning we were ready for a start, and the mandarin came to pay us his promised visit. He turned out to be a very young man, of dull countenance and not altogether prepossessing manner, who held hereditary office. His family, according to his account, had been hereditary governors of Kuei-chau for two hundred years. From other accounts, they had been so for four generations.

He was dressed in the Chinese fashion. The large

satin boots,—most unworkmanlike things they are,—were the only attempt at official dress; the coat and skull-cap were mufti. Altogether, although his face was not quite Chinese, he looked a commonplace specimen, but a poor imitation of a Chinaman, and compared unfavourably with many of his countrymen who were gathered about.

A MANDARIN IN UNDRESS.

He paid us the usual compliments, but with a bad grace, and asked us, with a manner which was not very earnest, to stay a week. When I gave him a small compass from my watch-chain, and a pair of imitation French coral earrings for his young child, he coolly asked me for a pencil for his wife! I had been warned that the good lady wanted one, and had a small German

silver pencil-case ready, which I gave him. I was inundated with thanks. The poor young fellow evidently felt relieved, when he found that he could face the good lady with the desired treasure!

POULA BOY (KUEI-CHAU DISTRICT.)

CHAPTER XL.

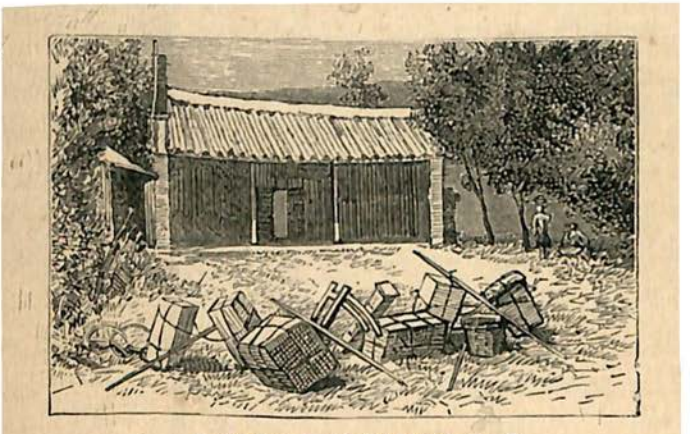
Fir-trees—S'su-t'ing—A stable inn—An Arcadian dinner party—Sketching a coquette—Fu-chau—No pawn-shops—Cessation of trade—Guild-halls turned into joss-houses—A nightmare amongst the gods—A lady to the rescue—A family party—Our Sancho Panza—Hill torrents and pine-forests—Cold and damp—Caves—A brigand captured—Cascades—Subterranean channel—Wet bedding—A wretched inn.

WE got away at 10 o'clock, later than we expected, but still we were satisfied in being able to make a start. Our march led us across the river to our old road, which we followed upwards, on the north side, for a mile and a half. We then entered a valley, skirting a northern branch of the main stream, which has a general south-west bearing. This stream is about forty yards in width, and corresponds in every particular with the one which we had just left. The road skirts it the whole way, winding in and out along the hillsides, which are here covered by small, but good fir-trees. A few large, stout ones were also passed.

Lofty mountain ranges rise at the back of those close by the stream, seemingly about 1000 to 2000 feet above our level, which was from 2500 to 3000 feet above the sea.

After passing a number of unimportant hamlets, the only one worthy of mention being Sam-t'ing on the

south bank, we reached S'su-t'ing in the evening, about 5 o'clock. Here we made our first acquaintance with a ma-tien, or "stable inn," and the result was that we never wished to lodge in another! Vain hope, however, with some thousand miles of Yünnan before one!



A MA-TIEN, OR "STABLE-INN."

Imagine a low-roofed shed, of large area, in the front of which the guests were housed, while the baggage animals were stabled close by in the same room at the back, with no partition of any sort between. This was the ma-tien! Our nine ponies, drivers and ourselves, all trooped in together and settled down — the ponies at the back, our luggage on the pack-saddles strewn about, and we ourselves in a sort of cock-loft, with mats not too clean under us, and corn-bins in a row behind us. A bamboo ladder gave us admission to our airy but smoky bedroom.

SHAPE OF PACK SADDLE.

We dined outside at a little table a few inches high, seated on small trestles (on which beds are usually

placed) a few inches broad. Quite an Arcadian little dinner party! Our operations greatly interested the village people, who crowded round to witness us eat. Amongst the onlookers were two girls, neighbours of ours, who would have been pronounced good-looking anywhere, with brown hair braided round the head, and the complexion of Canadians. Their eyes were soft brown, and altogether they were most fascinating. Their costume, of the type already described, was charming; one of them wore a white jacket, faced with light blue, which was very becoming. C. W. made friends with the young ones, and one of their mothers brought her child to our table for cake. We soon turned in and slept soundly, notwithstanding noise and smoke!

In the morning we breakfasted *al fresco*, and I made a sketch of our friend of the white jacket. She ran away, but *as usual*, when I calmly went on sketching an old lady close by, pique and curiosity brought her back, and I found her in her old place!

On the 22nd of March we left S'su-t'ing early and reached Fu-chau. After following the valley for some distance, we passed through the same sort of country and hamlets as hitherto. At mid-day a heavy mist ended in rain as we entered, and we were compelled to cut short our march. The place is known by three names, being generally called Fu-chau or Fu-t'ing. It sometimes also is called Tu-fu, as on European maps.

The *f* is pronounced locally like *p*, giving the sound

of Pu-t'ing. It is a wretched little place, with no trade or importance of any sort. The fact that it is suitable for the centre of a district, and well situated in the valley (which is some three miles in length), seems to be the reason for the town being considered worthy of a Sub-Prefect.

The town, containing some two hundred houses, lies straggling along the stream, which is called by various names locally. It runs east, past Kuei-chau (which we passed) into the upper southern branch of the West river at Pa-oi, where our march commenced. Pa-oi is the navigation limit for canoes, as Pe-sê is for ho-taus. The source of the stream, which at Fu-chau is only a few yards wide, was met to the north-west one day's march distant. The town has no shops and, like all the towns of Yünnan which we had seen, had no pawnshop that we could hear of. This constitutes a remarkable difference from Chinese towns proper.

The only things noteworthy were a broken-down bridge, which had stood thus since the Mussulman rebellion now more than ten years; and the Canton guild-house which we inhabited, which stands in a good position on the hillside at the back of the town. Most of these Canton guild-buildings seem to be used as joss-houses in this part of Yünnan, as there is now no business carried on, the Canton traders having been driven away.

Our beds—a few planks—were laid close by the two fantastic life-size figures which, as already described at

Ping-ma, represent the civil and military aides of the local god. The military lieutenant's wild figure and threatening attitude floated before me as I fell asleep, and performed the part of an indigestible supper in producing nightmare, greatly fatigued as I was with the last few days' work. The flickering light sent these monstrosities dancing round about the joss-house. The Sub-Prefect was absent, and we had to get our guard changed here. The dilemma was solved by his wife, who gave the necessary orders. In these uplands, the ladies have a great deal more to say in all matters than their sisters of the plains.

Next morning was wet and miserable. We started early for what was called an "eighty li" march, which was to take us eleven hours and evidently promised to be something more than usually disagreeable, and it redeemed its promise!

The road, after twenty-four hours' rain, was something terrible, and we had at first to march enveloped in heavy driving mist which, towards mid-day, changed to rain. In one place I had to stop—the mist was so dense—and take refuge in a peasant's cabin on the roadside. Having entered and after asking for a light, I shared my slender meal with the Yünnanese "brave" and a merry little girl who, with her mother and aunt, was unravelling and picking cotton.

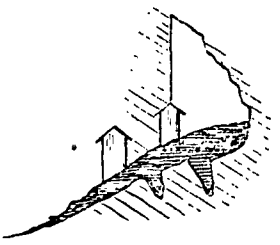
I soon made friends with the old people, and found them kindness itself. I sat next the fire, while the old lady stirred the contents of a Kopf's concentrated soup

tin in her pot, and we made quite a family party. I made them taste this soup which, admirable as it is for travellers, did not please them. The empty tin, a small gilt thing, pleased the child greatly. I taught her to say "good-bye," and she repeated it as I left. Should any learned savant some years hence pass this way, he may perhaps evolve some interesting theory out of his inner consciousness regarding this curiosity.

Soon after leaving these good and kind people, who all crowded to the door and bade me good-bye as I left, I came upon our horsemen, baggage animals and cook. The latter looked the very picture of abject misery, as he sat on the top of a wooden saddle on a pony, with his legs tucked up nearly to his chin, a red blanket enveloping him to the waist, a broad straw hat flapping back in the rain and an umbrella over head. He was certainly not cut out for exploration, and I am sure counted the hours till he might sight civilised parts again, where pots and pans were to be found. This man on horseback would have formed a fit subject for Caldecott's pencil—a Cantonese Sancho Panza.

The scenery we passed through was magnificent, consisting of a sea of fir-clad hills with torrents, fed by the rain, leaping down. It is hard to admire the beautiful when you are alone and are marching, drenched to the skin, over a boulder road, constantly slipping into twelve inches of mud. We were now at a height of over four thousand feet above sea-level and the cold, particularly during the rain, was very appreciable.

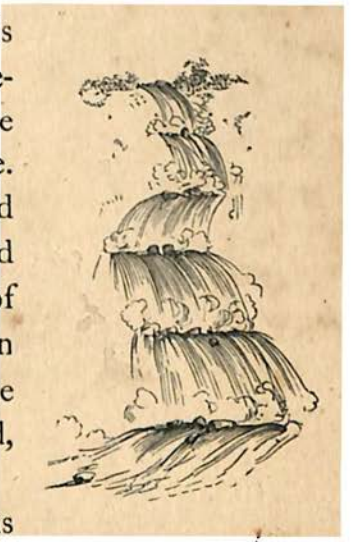
In the afternoon we came upon caves, four in number, lying some few hundred yards off the road to the south. It required some strength of mind to wade across a stream and make my way to them over a boulder-paved road! The "brave" would at first have none of it. However I pressed him, and he came. The largest, some sixty feet high, was seemingly of considerable depth—how much I could not tell in the dark, with no lights with me. It had two portals or archways over the masonry approach, and the front had a face wall of rough rubble stone built up securely, and steps led up to it from the stream, over which there was a small granite culvert. The arch entrances were wretched affairs. I found that the caves were used by poor people working near the place, for storing their clothes and food during the day.



Until ten years ago, the large cave was the robber haunt of a man famous in these parts who, with a band of some thirty aboriginal followers, pillaged the country side. A diplomatic mandarin trapped him by a piece of trickery which was related to me as quite praiseworthy. A friend of the brigand was bought over and told to convey the promise of a free pardon, and certain rights over the country close by, if his chief surrendered. The latter did, and his head was exposed near the Fu-chau city gate a few hours later! The

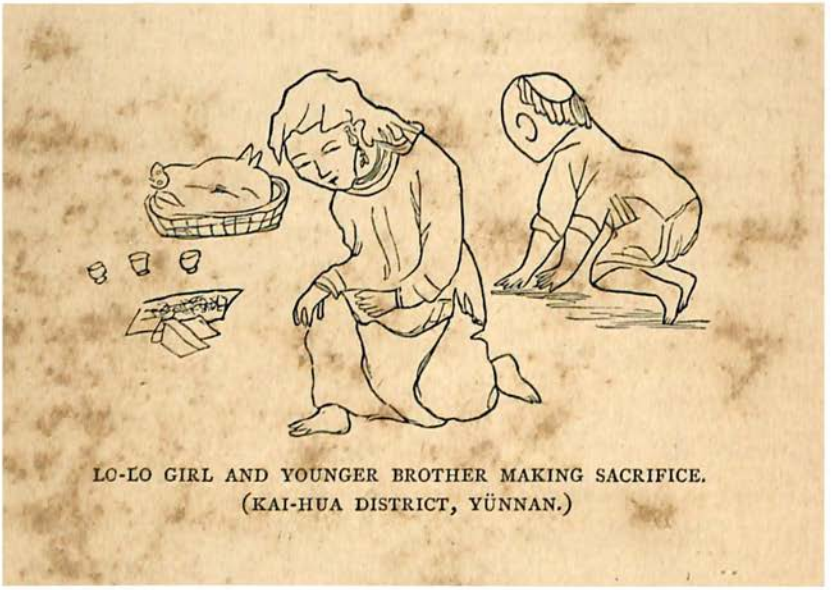
caves do not seem to have been used for religious purposes at any time. They are formed of natural limestone.

Soon after this we came upon beautiful cascades, five in number, some hundred feet in height altogether, tumbling one into the other. Large reservoirs were formed in the limestone rock and the effect of the white foaming water, the green pools and the light yellow-coloured limestone rocks worn to grotesque shapes was wonderfully picturesque. Wet as I was, I stood and watched them for some time and disgusted my "brave" sadly! From one of the caves there was a subterranean water channel flowing into the stream close by which, I was told, came through the limestone hill.



In the afternoon I lost all signs of my companion and the caravan and halted, at last, at a wretched village in a miserable house, as the stable inn was occupied. The hours went by, and no one appeared, although messengers had been sent out. At last C. W. with some men turned up. How delighted I was! Some time after, the tin-chai arrived; but the horses had gone on some miles with all the food and bedding. Here was a dilemma! In the end all came well; they returned and we had something to eat, and could sleep in dry clothes, though our bedding was wet. The floor

of the wretched shanty was rotten. I nearly went through amongst the pigs during the night. The men were all much disgusted with this day, and I heard them asking how many more *remained!*



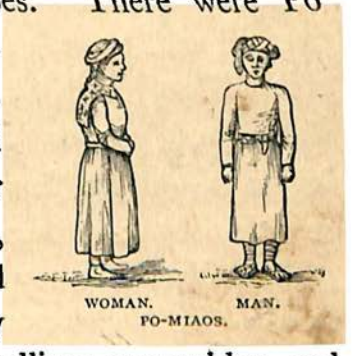
LO-LO GIRL AND YOUNGER BROTHER MAKING SACRIFICE.
(KAI-HUA DISTRICT, YÜNNAN.)

CHAPTER XLI.

Aborigines at market—Si-yang—Po Myaus—Kai-hua-jen—Hwa Lo-los—Yeou-jen—A fearful weapon—The monkey people—The eight tribes—Taking it in turns—A panorama—Yang-liu-tsin—Dysentery—Bad water—Tea—Fir and cypress—Mountain air—Fo-cho—Pau-yu-kwan—Heaping on the clothes—Draughty dwellings—Over the worst bit—Bareness of the limestone plateau—Kwang-nan—A hearty welcome—A quiet people—Kung-sui's châtelaine—Ignorance of officials—Not worth plundering—Disbelief in private enterprise—Government patronage.

THE weather cleared, and we got away for another long march with some arduous mountaineering. During the day we came, by a piece of great good fortune, upon a market being held at a village named Si-yang, where there is one every five days.

Here we beheld, what I had longed to see, some examples of the aboriginal tribes. There were Po Miaos, or Myaus, and Kai-hua-jens, Hwa Lo-los and Yeou-jens. The Po Myau women were dressed as in the adjoining sketch. Their features, and those of the men, looked common, degraded and low in the human scale. They seemed very poor, and were selling vegetables and other produce.


WOMAN. MAN.
PO-MIAOS.

One Po Myau had a fearful flint weapon, with which he could kill deer, he said. They are really savages.

The best-clad men were dressed, as shewn, similar to the Po Myaus elsewhere.

The landlord of the inn told me that the Po Myaus are the Pen-ti-jen, or the natives of the soil of this country.

HEAD-DRESS.

Many of them wore white turbans and blue coats and trousers. The women generally had a five-inch length of cloth falling down from their blue turban, and their head-dress greatly resembled that of the peasant women in parts of France.

All the Yeou-jens, who were present, fled immediately they saw us approach their quarter of the market. Their flight may have been owing to the officious kindness of the stable innkeeper, who was accompanying us, and not to fright at the sight of us and our attendant crowd. These people are held in dread by the people of China proper, who believe firmly that they have tails and are like monkeys.

The Hwa Lo-lo women wore dark blue turbans ornamented with roses or other flowers placed in the right side. They had blue jackets, skirts and aprons and white leggings,—a few having straw sandals, but most being unshod.

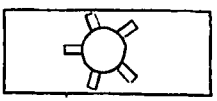
HWA MIAO. TEOU LAO.

The Hwa Miao women had flowers in the centre of the turban, and wore a cape, highly ornamented in white and blue, or red, black and white, or yellow. Some Teou Lao men (called also Kaihua-jen, or people of Kaihua) were dressed as shewn. They had

blue turbans (twisted), blue jackets and waistcoats, ornamented with gilt buttons, red waist-cloth, blue trousers and gaiters and straw sandals.

Of the tribes of this neighbourhood, namely the Kaihua and Kwang-nan, there are eight kinds, namely, Pei or Po Miao Hei, Miao (white and black Miaos), Hei Lo-lo, Pei Lo-lo, Hwa Lo-lo, Ten-pan Yeou, Lan-ten Yeou, and the Kaihua-jen. The Hei Lo-los alone wear the Lo-lo horn, and a turban. The Pei Lo-lo, and all the others, wear a queue or pig-tail and a turban.

The Lan-ten Yeou-jen men wear a pig-tail, black jacket, trousers, and head-dress. The women have a long black coat, with loose black trousers, and a head-dress with flowers worked in *white cloth* on the top of the head. These people are chiefly found near Kwang-nan and Kaihua, scattered about the country.



HEAD-DRESS.

The *couvade*, or hatching survival, is in force with the Miaos. The husband goes to bed for forty days, while the wife works in the fields. The explanation given for this strange custom is that the man should bear the same hardships as are undergone by his wife. The lines in 'Hudibras':—

> ——"Chineses go to bed
> And lie in, in their ladies' stead,"

allude to this custom.

After Si-yang, a steep ascent took us for two hours straight up hill, giving us a wonderful view of the valley on the right and Si-yang. The stream, with its three-arched stone bridge, was seen far below, and several

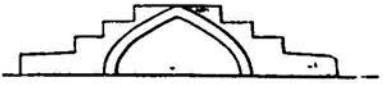
hamlets scattered about the sides of the valley. The panorama is closed in by the hills surrounding the valley, the stream rushing down disappears at the north end of the valley through a steep gorge in the hills.

Late in the evening we reached the village of Yang-liu-tsin, footsore and worn out. My heart sank within me when I beheld the leading horseman pass the village and the ma-tien, at the farther end. However, I saw with joy that they halted a few hundred yards farther on, at an old and seemingly deserted joss-house. The village is an unimportant one, consisting of some hundred houses. After knocking and calling at the door for about ten minutes, we gained admittance from an old lady who resided there. We gladly threw ourselves down on some planks and, after enjoying some food and a cup of tea, were soon sound asleep.

C. W. had a first touch of dysentery, but I was delighted to find that a dose of chlorodyne and some precious cognac made it succumb. The water in Yünnan is very bad for strangers, and I drank only tea; but I had great difficulty in persuading my companion to follow my example. Our large Chinese teapot carried in the chair was always on the brew, and was a grand invention; we drank it without milk or sugar, and very good it was.

The next day we skirted valleys as usual, through fir and cypress-clad hills and beautiful, green-coloured foliage of small growth. The air at this height (5,000 ft.) was delicious, and the scent of the pines was very refreshing. After passing a couple of unimportant hamlets,

we reached Fo-cho, which is remarkable only for a stone bridge, with steps on both sides, as in sketch.



After a march, the shortness of which was very welcome after the toil of the previous day, we halted at Pau-yü-kwan, a small mountain village situated in a small hollow in the hills, on a chilly, cold-looking site. Sure enough it turned out cold enough, for towards evening we had to put on our ulsters, and turned in wearing all our clothes and every available stitch of covering on the beds.

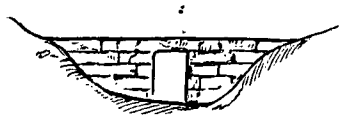
We were lodged here in the mandarin's yamen, there being no inn or joss-house; but even in the squire's house, the wooden walling had no means of keeping out the wind. There was an orifice of 20 feet by 6 feet at the side of our room, in addition to chinks everywhere. The cold, piercing blast seemed to cut into us; and the rain, which poured in torrents all night long, came driving in upon us and caused us no little discomfort. How the people can live in rough log cabins, in such a climate, passes my understanding.

PENTI-JEN.

At Si-yang the market people were selling principally Kwang-nan clothes, made of good and strong material, ox-tail chowries, tobacco, iron ware from Yünnan, vegetables and other articles of food. There were no Tändstikkor matches,—this was the first place where I had not seen them.

There were some pretty faces, but none like the couple at S'su-t'ing. One of those, whose features I can now recall, had that air of disdain, that "petit air de doute, de mélancolie," which Alfred de Musset ascribed to Ninon in his mémorable lines.

The entrance to Pau-yü-kwan has a stone gateway



built of rude rubble, in a natural dip in the rocky hill-side.

On the 26th of March a short stage along broken, hilly country, about 4,500 feet above sea-level, brought us to Kwang-nan-fu, a prefectural city and the end of our initial march of nine days. This is reported to be the worst bit of road in the south of Yünnan, and it was some satisfaction to think we had conquered so formidable an enemy. A difficult march to the traveller is what a troublesome part of a campaign is to the soldier, and both look back with pleasure on past difficulties.

The country now was the real plateau of Yünnan, with a mass of hills cropping out, from 500 to 1000 feet above the plain. This part may truly be called, what I have seen the whole of Yünnan termed, an "uneven table land." Our past experience certainly points to its being *uneven*.

The hills look as if they were volcanic in their origin, being composed of black, broken, jagged masses, terribly sterile. They are, I believe, limestone ranges, worn by the rains into their present bare appearance. Red clay, washed down from the exposed portions, has been

deposited in the hollows, as shown in the sketch. Little cultivation is visible on the high lands, and the country is very poor.

Kwang-nan is seen as a turn is taken in the hills, about two miles from the city. From some few hundred feet above it, the town looks a large straggling series of villages rather than a city. When you enter, however, it seems larger. It is enclosed by walls, and lies in a basin some five miles in diameter encircled by an amphitheatre of hills.

A number of small cemeteries is passed, and some few caves on the right, as you approach it from the south. A watch-tower stands on a small rising ground, some hundred yards south of the town, and several joss-houses are prominent features on the eastern side. The south end of the city wall stands on a rising ground, up which winds a stone causeway, bridged and substantially made, leading to the southern gateway.

We made an imposing entry. I reposed in the tin-chai's chair, C. W. rode the boy's pony, and the interpreter mounted the cook's. We sent on the "braves" to inquire where we could lodge, and soon took up our quarters at the Chang-hwang-miao, or Chang-hwang temple—a very fine, spacious and well-built structure, covering a large area.

The Prefect was *indisposed*—that is, he did not wish to see us—but the General sent word that he hoped we would call in the afternoon. The magistrate and General sent presents, and all their cards. We were

surrounded by a tremendous crowd all the day, until late in the night; the people were perched on trees, on the walls, up at the windows and indeed everywhere. I went for a walk on the city walls and through the town, and then to the General's. I found him a pleasant, cheery old boy, a Chien-t'ai and former comrade of General Li of Pe-sê. He was very effusive in his reception, seized me with both hands and made his little son, whom I had seen earlier in the day, come to me.

He had learnt our western salutation, namely the "shake hands," in North China, having passed through Shanghai once, and seen our houses and gardens there, which he praised greatly. The little boy had been brought before, to have a look at the two foreigners, but howled when I signed to him to come near. The attendant wanted to force him to come, but I would not allow this on any account. After a little, he came himself, and received a pencil.

The General wanted us to stay, and, when I told him of our photography at Pe-sê, wished his portrait to be taken. Over the shoulder of my host I saw a couple of heads, one of them rather pretty, peering through the door at the barbarian stranger. I promised to take his photo next morning if possible, but the weather turned out very unfavourable. He gave me a very good account of the people, especially the aborigines, who, he said, were simple, honest and industrious, leaving the civil mandarin little to do. The Miao-tzus in the north-east and north, he said, were altogether different.

The Chinese have been unable to accommodate the ways of the hill people to their own. Their sole idea in treating them is coercion. They want some modern Kung-sui to induce the people to turn to honest labour, or as he said, "to wear oxen at the waist and heifers at the belt," in other words to abandon their swords and daggers for more peaceful instruments.

It is astonishing how little Chinese officials seem to, and, I believe, really do know of their country, even of their own provinces and district. The Pe-sê Prefect and General knew little, and the Kwang-nan Chen-t'ai knew less, of the roads and other matters. The Pe-sê Prefect had hardly ever been out of the town. A famous Chinese statesman is quoted as saying, "once seeing is better than a hundred times hearing." But few, if any, of their officials act on this maxim; and all they know of their districts is got through the medium of their secretaries or go-betweens. The itinerary of the road to Kwang-nan given us by General Li, at Pe-sê, proved to be founded on a defective memory, and the stages were confused in a terrible manner. It seems incredible that officials should be in such gross ignorance of their own and the neighbouring districts, but it is so.

The old Chen-t'ai at Kwang-nan dwelt on the dangers of the road, and not only asked us to be sure and take the safer—*and worse*, as we found—of the two roads, but insisted on sending a guard of six braves with us, an act which was more complimentary than to our liking. His warning as to the dangers of brigandage (which really does exist to some extent, I believe) was

met by my saying that a few tins of Liebig, half-a-dozen instruments and a small amount of silver, would hardly be sufficient to tempt the brigands against an armed party like ours.

The General questioned me closely about our object in travelling, and I have no doubt thought my plan of survey and study a polite pretext. Is it to be wondered at that the Chinese cannot comprehend the reason for English private enterprise in travel, when even Frenchmen are sceptical as to any one undertaking such a project single-handed and unaided by the Government? The people on board the 'Pei-ho,' in which we sailed from Marseilles to Hong-kong, expressed polite incredulity at my attempting, unaided, an exploration which was intended to cover nearly as much ground as that of the French Commission of 1867–9, on which such a huge sum was spent by the French Government.

A friend of mine told me, in Canton, that he was one day seated next a French gentleman of great intelligence who, on discussing my proposed journey, shrugged his shoulders as only Frenchmen can and said, "Ah, yes! Private exploration, no doubt, but the funds!" That a young Government official should give up time and devote the money necessary for the project was incredible, and he no doubt firmly believed that the money was found by the Government of India. This comes from the system of Government patronage in all such undertakings in France.

The General wanted us to go to the capital, Yünnan-fu, and he tried to tempt us with the promise of a fine

road, and there being more to be seen. But our route lay in unbeaten tracks southwards, and so "we stood not upon the order of our going," and went.

LO-LO FESTIVAL (KAI-HUA DISTRICT, YÜNNAN).

CHAPTER XLII.

Our détour to Kwang-nan—Twenty miles a day over mountains—A military grumble—A rash remark—"Flying in song"—A present of venison—A swarm of eyes—An antidote for opium—An elopement—Crumbling city-wall—A large market—Mixed races—Chinese in the towns—Aborigines in the country—White for mourning—Lacustrine formation—Slate and sandstone grit—Kaling—A mother's fear—Conglomerate—A family travelling—A "Di Vernon"—Lucre *versus* love—Honorary portal—Heavily laden—Strapping wenches—Poverty—An honoured pig—A romantic spot—An unteachable boy.

WE found that, by great good luck, we were able to make our way to Lin-an or thereabouts, by Kai-hua and Men-tzu, which both lay on our originally projected route; so that we were able after all to take up our intended line, having made a most interesting, though difficult, détour to Kwang-nan. The diversion from our route enabled us to travel through a part of Yünnan never before set foot on by any European, to enjoy grand scenery, to observe and gather information regarding many interesting aboriginal tribes. Thus, instead of being a matter for regret, our change of course turned out to be a piece of singular good fortune.

The direct road from Kuei-chau to Kai-hua was said to be merely a track travelled by the Pen-ti-jen, or "people of the country," and to take nearly as long as the road *viâ* Kwang-nan, which is nearly double the length on the maps. It was described as being a terribly mountainous

track, passing across a sea of hills. No one, except a few savages, is said to live on the route or to travel by it, and the latter are said to find their way up mountain paths which no coolies or caravans dare attempt. From here to Men-tzu is nine days' journey, in average stages of 60 li (about 20 miles), which is quite tiring enough in mountainous country, when the lodging at the end of the day's journey is in the ma-tien (stable-inn), or in some dismantled joss-house.

The General was very loquacious. The military are always less reticent than their civil confrères in China. He complained of the lessened influence of the military mandarins since peace had been restored. The war-horse, he said, was no longer needed and was treated with a very lessened degree of respect. The civil officials and the "red sashes," the literati, were everything now. According to him the bookworms had it all their own way.

The Prefect of Kwang-nan did not seem to be a favourite with the people, though it is difficult to get them to say much about their officials. In this country it is said to be dangerous to speak of the "Prefect for five days more," as they state that a man was once foolish enough to speak of an official, who was about to be replaced, and paid the penalty for the remark with his head.

Few men in office now earn the esteem or good-will of the people, and it could be said of few, as it was told of Confucius, that "he became the idol of the people, and flew in songs through their mouths."

On my return to the temple, the General sent some very useful presents, amongst which were some dried venison and some candles for the journey—a more suitable gift than the "Buddha's hand" presented to C. W. by the Pesê Prefect. The crowd remained until late and became very oppressive, although the people were good-natured enough. It is impossible to write or do anything with a swarm of eyes at the windows, doors, and around you *everywhere.*

Just before we turned in the tin-chai arrived, with a great show of secrecy, to say that the magistrate had sent a confidant to ask us for some medicine for destroying the passion for the "black smoke," namely opium. This had constantly occurred to us, and shows how they feel the thraldom of the terrible master whom the opium-smoker serves. Of course we could do nothing, and had to say so.

Kwang-nan had lately been scandalised by the ill-conduct of a married lady, who had eloped. The story was related to us with a great show of horror. The poor people little know how common such *esclandres* are at home, and it may be imagined that I did not choose to enlighten them on the subject. I am told such love passages in China are not frequent, mainly, I have no doubt, because opportunity so seldom offers. The rules of Chinese society prescribe with extreme severity the retirement of women. But, probably, these little scandals are all the more interesting when they do occur, on that very account.

The city wall was in the usual state of dis-repair.

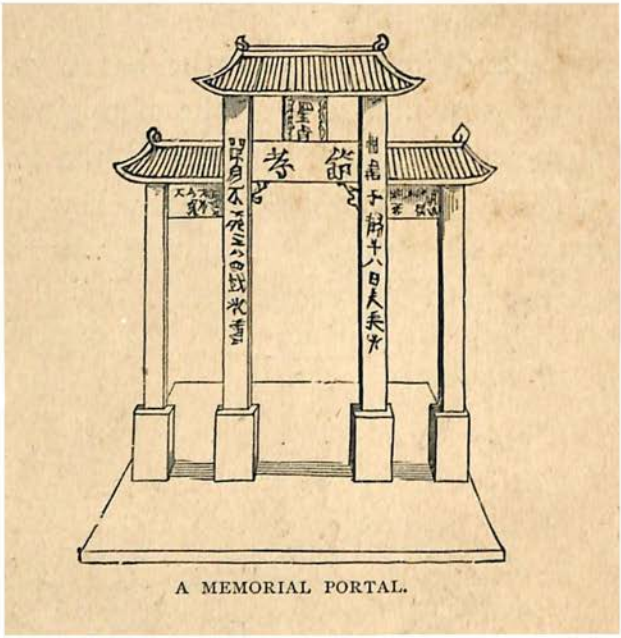
Although it is built of massive bricks, huge portions have fallen down and it is difficult to make one's way over the breaches which occur here and there. The city has a great market, and is larger than it appeared on our approach.

Luckily, the day we arrived, the bazaar was being held, and we saw numbers of the aboriginal people, amongst whom the fanciful dresses of the Po Myaus and Hwa Lo-los, the latter with red, yellow and white flowers in their hair, attracted most of our attention.

HWA MIAOS (KAI-HUA DISTRICT, YÜNNAN).

In the main street, which presents a busy air and is well-built, an honorary portal of handsome carving, in massive slabs of stone, had been erected in honour of a lady who lived to the age of eighty and for some

fifty years of that time was a widow. A lady who marries a second time is thought to be a very wicked person. In China, more than anywhere, the laws and customs have been made for man and not for woman.



A MEMORIAL PORTAL.

The people of the city had a more Chinese look than the country people whom we had been seeing lately. In fact, one-third of the women had "lily feet." They were not all Chinese, but chiefly the descendants of aboriginal races who have been taken to wife by Chinamen; and so had become Chinese in course of time. It is only in the cities of Yünnan that one sees the Chinese. The people of the country districts are all aborigines.

The temple we lived in was a fine structure, finer than any we had yet seen. Some forty small tables were laid within the precincts of its courtyards, giving the

SPECIMEN OF A "PAI-FANG," OR PORTAL. (*To face p.* 348, Vol. I.)

place the air of a huge restaurant. All the people wore white turbans, or fillets of white cloth, and it turned out to be the occasion of the ceremony connected with the removal of the coffin of some well-to-do family's relative.

On the 27th of March, after the usual delay, we got away from Kwang-nan about 10 o'clock and commenced our march over a bad road, consisting of the usual mixture of boulders and clay mud, rendered almost impassable by the heavy rain we experienced. The rains in Yünnan are said to commence about the 25th of May and, though not very heavy, to continue for about one hundred days, during which time nearly all communication ceases. But we have been having, if not heavy rain, at least sufficient to make the roads terribly trying.

As we left the city, we passed several joss-houses in the outlying suburbs, and looking over the plain, encircled by the amphitheatre of hills in which Kwang-nan lies, saw numerous villages dotted all round. The large basin is covered with bare mounds or knolls, the intervening spaces being not altogether cultivated, but rather a sterile-looking country. Several hollows have water in them, but there is no sign of any large stream. The plain has the appearance of having once been a lake, through the surrounding hills of which the water has pierced and formed drains which allow the water to escape. The soil is mostly a reddish clay, washed down from the rising grounds, and is extremely poor.

A mile and a half from the city, we crossed a stone bridge and then entered a valley, zig-zagging alongside the stream. The hills were high and bare, and we noticed in the roadside slates and grits cropping out, but the rocks are mostly limestone.

At mid-day we passed a handsome carved gravestone, set up on the roadside, and immediately afterwards a three-arched bridge. Crossing a ridge and entering another valley, the village of Kaling, a place of some forty houses lying on the stream side, was reached in the afternoon.

Here we lodged in the headman's house. The old couple were kindly; but their house offered us but poor protection against the wind. The servants slept below, while we had our beds in a loft above, on straw laid on the floor. The planks were very rickety, and as I ascended, I fell through one of the treads of the ladder. Had I not luckily saved myself with my hands, we might have studied life for some weeks in Kaling.

Next morning on leaving I asked our good hostess to bring her youngest child, a dot of five, in order to present her with a trifling gift. The child was hurried away by the old lady, and actually locked up while the mother stood in front of the door. I had to explain that I had no desire to take away her little one, that it was not a western custom to eat children—though Charles Lamb did like them boiled—and so the child was produced and the gift given. Suspicious as the people are, a few kind words and any little, even imbecile, joke will make friends of them.

The next day the road was of the same character. A bad track, passing from the skirting of one small valley to another. There appeared to be a little more show of agriculture and population, though both were still poor. The limestone hills now changed to conglomerate. The hillsides were thinly clad with pine of a very poor quality.

Early in the day we passed, for the second time since leaving Kwang-nan, a family party on travel, the ladies seated sideways on pony back, and the husband afoot, carrying the child slung behind him like a small bale of goods. The ladies are evidently better off in Yünnan than in the plains of China. As we were crossing a small valley, we encountered one, comely and gaily dressed, who alighted nimbly as she neared us, and commenced a lively conversation, which unluckily we could not sustain.

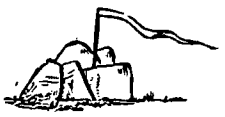
This "Di Vernon" of the Yünnanese highlands was evidently an imperious creature, and her regular features and colour betokened no Chinese origin, although her custume did. Probably she was the concubine of some affluent Chinaman, and had adopted the Chinese dress out of deference to her lord's inclination, a practice common in Yünnan.

As she stood flicking her whip, she looked a perfect Amazon. In this country the comelier young aboriginal women are mated to well-to-do Chinamen, generally as concubines though sometimes as wives,

a good income having here, as well as in our country, a great influence on the marital destiny of the fair sex.

Many a fair young creature, who merits some kinder fate, is mated to some blasé old dotard, whose frame and intellect are enfeebled by excess and by the opium-pipe.

An honorary portal of carved limestone stands over the roadway at a place we passed early in the day. Numerous gravestones, some of them the orthodox



carved stone, and others mostly heaps of boulders or blocks thrown loosely together, with a flag fluttering from a small staff or bamboo, were seen marking the resting-place of those who had gone to "wander amongst the genii."

Numbers of peasantry, men and women, were met staggering along under heavy loads on their head, or carried on a bamboo over their shoulder. The women were sturdy, strapping wenches, more good-humoured looking than comely. They had tight short jackets, petticoats tucked up, check turbans, with dark blue and white ribs and a long end sticking out. Many of them wore the bamboo sun-hat. The people seemed

wretchedly poor. Their dress as well as their habitations, which are principally of mud or clay, with thatch or tiles admitting the wind and rain, fully denoted their poverty. The wonder is that the country in this neighbourhood, stony and barren-looking, can provide food for these poor people.

While halting during the day, to eat our hasty mid-day meal, we saw the curious spectacle of a huge porker being carried in a framework in poles, borne by four men, while the owner trotted along with his child on his back and a birdcage in his hand. Footsore and wearied as we were, we envied the porker. Just before we halted for the day at the village of Hung-she-nai, we passed a precipitous rock some three hundred feet high, jutting over the stream, into which pour some fine waterfalls. Close by stands a stone bridge, in a most romantic spot. I sat for some time here to rest till C. W. came up, and admired the scene.

At this place we found the ma-tien quite a palatial residence for these parts. We had tables, though of rough construction, and trestle beds, on which straw was strewn. Both tables and beds were rarities to which we had not been accustomed in these hostelries. The plank floor, too, was substantial and it was possible to move about without endangering our necks.

Our boy Akiu was the most strange creature. He was the roughest of servants, and had positively learnt nothing of our ways since he started. The most eloquent of gestures, which any savage would have understood, was incomprehensible to him. After a long experience I could pronounce him the dullest man, who had ever served me. If you asked for a pipe, he brought you water; when asked for tea, he brought you rice, and so on. His waiting was most comical when not most provoking, and would have given some people fits. His service was a prolonged

"Comedy of Errors." A favourite habit of Akiu's was to thrust his arm right across a table and seize any dish, whenever *he* considered you had had enough. However, we could forgive all this in consideration of his pluck and goodwill.

YEOU-JEN (KAI-HUA DISTRICT, YÜNNAN).

CHAPTER XLIII.

Poppy cultivation—Rocky outcrops—Limestone—Po Miao and Hong-tau Miao—Achi-to—A plateau with knolls—Pine and shrubs—Tu-po-nee—The Long-jen—A cleanly people—The Pou-la and Pei Lo-lo—Matches—Made to sell—Kindness of a schoolmaster—Pictures of the aborigines—Break-jaw biscuits—A fine view—Long-jen villages—A lake—Po-pyau—Dreary uplands—Chang-na-gai—Hwa Lo-los—A crèche required—Talking by gestures—A useless cook—Chang-na-hsien—A sleeping-den—Importance of fine weather—Toddling peasant women—Comparisons.

THE following day we passed a succession of little valleys, and crossed from one to the other by small saddles in the hills. A number of villages, all very poor, and a considerable quantity of cultivation, principally poppy, were met with.

For the first time we observed the whole of one small valley under poppy cultivation. We had so far seen but a small area planted with this crop, whilst northern Yünnan, from all accounts, is extensively under that cultivation. The fields of poppy, with their delicate red, white, or purple flowers and green leaves, make a beautiful contrast to the rocky hillsides, and a pleasant relief to the generally sombre colouring of the country. The opium is cultivated here mainly for sale in the cities, and for export to other Chinese provinces, the aborigines using it but little themselves.

The hillsides, bare as usual, were seemingly strewn

with huge boulders scattered there, as if by some super human hand, but in reality they were merely the out crop of the hill-rocks. During the day the conglomerate ceased, and limestone again appeared.

MIAOS (KAI-HUA DISTRICT, YÜNNAN).

We met a number of different aboriginal people, notably several groups of Po Miao women, carrying vegetables gathered in the jungles; they were dressed as those described before at Si-yang. A number of Hong-

tau Miao women, some of whom we had previously met, formed a curious sight. The sailor's collar in blue and white, the white petticoat and leggings, and blue jacket, make an effective costume.

The Po Miao women were dressed in a pure white jacket and a petticoat reaching below the knee; they had no leggings. One woman was carrying a huge basket on her back, whilst her husband was dressed

in ragged and dirty white. We noticed a man with a dark-blue turban, red tassel and large inscribed silver buttons to his vest. He started back, when I advanced to examine them.

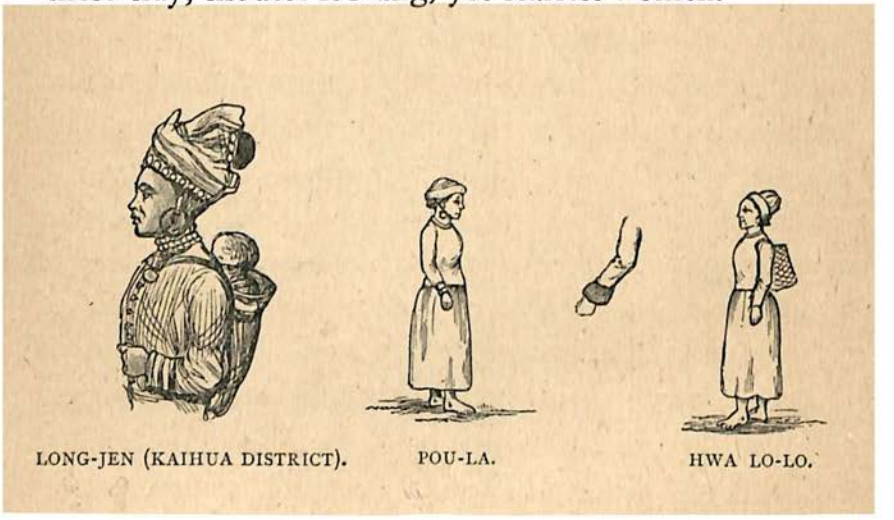
We halted at Achi-to, a well-paved village of some two hundred houses, which were better than any we had met with since leaving Kwang-nan. The usual crowd collected at the inn,—a rude affair, with mud walls and straw beds. The children and young people were good-looking and pleasant featured. Small feet were not uncommon, and yellow, pink and white flowers in the turbans amongst the women were usual.

On the 30th of March our road lay through a country that had the appearance of a plateau, somewhat irregular in surface throughout, and pierced as it were by numerous knolls, hills and ridges, which rise out of the ground in the most irregular way. The hills are of limestone, very conical and steep, but none more than 500 feet in height.

Occasionally the road, after a stretch of undulating level country, passed through a gorge between the hills, and once or twice over a high spur. The hills were covered with pine and shrubs, none of any size. The valleys were but scantily cultivated, and the population was sparse and poor. A little poppy was grown here and there, and we saw numerous hamlets, of the poorest description.

At midday we halted at Tu-po-nee, a market village of twenty-five houses, built on either side of one street, in the centre of which was an open space for the five-

day fair. Here we came across a number of interesting aboriginal people chaffering at the fair, and trooping in from all sides of the neighbouring country. For the first time we saw a number of Long-jen, the women of which tribe we found were remarkable for their cleanly, sober, yet dapper costume and appearance. C. W. said that one might almost fancy oneself in a Norwegian glen on a Sunday morning, as we passed a troop of these tidy, modest-looking, yet fearless women.



LONG-JEN (KAIHUA DISTRICT). POU-LA. HWA LO-LO.

The Pou-la women all wear a turban, coat and petticoat, and cross coat with apron, all made of dark blue. Some have red, green and blue on the cuffs of their sleeves, and also on their collars. The Pei Lo-lo women are good-looking, sturdy wenches, with white coats tucked up at the sides. Hwa Lo-los were common, wearing flowers, real and worked, in their turbans.

In the market-place we noticed amongst the goods set out for sale, in addition to tobacco and cloth of local

manufacture, needles, small photograph-mirrors of Canton make and Tändstikkor matches, which are to be found nearly everywhere. At Kwang-nan we bought some of these useful matches, but found them to be a spurious imitation and of Japanese make. On the top was marked "Nagasaki," Japan. The rest was a close imitation of the original, except that safety was spelt "saffty." The aboriginal people of course know no better, and purchase these most inferior articles.

While sitting outside on a log, to partake of tea and boiled eggs, a crowd of men and children gathered round us. Amongst them was an old gentleman who tried hard to converse with us, until he found that we could not speak the language. He then with ceremony brought out for our refection Puerh tea, which was very welcome, and proceeded to try us with writing, evidently thinking that we were able to read Chinese. We could do no other than sign our thanks and take leave, as the tin-chai had lagged behind. We found later in the evening, when he again joined us, that the old gentleman, who turned out to be the village schoolmaster, had written us an invitation to spend a few days in his house.

He pointed out to us several of the different tribes present, and did us a great service, through the tin-chai, by telling him of the existence of a series of pictures of the aboriginal people, made by an amateur artist (a gentleman who painted for pleasure). This man, he said, was dead, but copies, he believed, were extant in Kai-hua. One series had been sent to the Viceroy of Yünnan as a

present, and one was in the possession of his family, at Kai-hua.

This was just what I was most anxious to set eyes on, if not procure, and I urged the tin-chai, backed by

A CHINESE TEACHER.

promises of a present, to make diligent search for a sight of them when we should get to Kai-hua. The people were very good-natured and tasted our biscuits, making terrible faces over the hardness of our ship captains,

which we ourselves had christened "break-jaw," a name they eminently deserved.

On the next day we had a trying march of thirty miles to Chang-na-hsien, a magistracy town. Immediately on leaving Achi, we made a sudden ascent and had a magnificent view,—a perfect sea of hills all round, with few high ones, away to the north and east, towering above. The day was beautiful, and the prospect in the clear morning sun was delightful.

During the morning we passed several Long-jen hamlets and, soon after midday, skirted a lake of clear water, some 1,500 feet in diameter and nearly round, hid in the hollow of bare hills. There is a gorge at either end of the lake. The hills here, and for some days afterwards, were bare, barren and rocky.

After the lake we entered a large extent of bare moorland, with no villages except one by name Po-pyau, inhabited by Long-jens. Near the village was a large reservoir or tank on sloping ground, bounded in by earthen dams which were faced with stone. Next a waste weir of stone, which allowed the water to be led away to cultivated hollows not far off, was a group of women washing and drawing water, who seemed much amused at our appearance as we passed.

Some four miles before reaching Po-pyau, a curious tunnelled cavern, some 200 feet long and 15 feet square, was met in a sharp peaked lime-stone hill, standing isolated in the plain.

These terribly lone uplands have an air of great desolation and,—but for some stray cattle, buffaloes,

oxen and goats, and an occasional traveller on pony back, or some peasantry carrying loads,—might almost be counted uninhabited.

Some three miles before Chang-na-hsien, the village of Chang-na-gai was passed, with a fine causeway enclosing tanks and a small stone culvert. The village had a fine paved roadway through it, and the houses were of recent construction—better than we had seen elsewhere, though they were of the usual sun-dried brick or mud, with tiled or thatch roofs.

The people were mostly Hwa Lo-los, and the flowers in their hair and turbans made them remarkable. They are a handsome race, superior to the Chinese, of whom there were a good number in the village, living, we were told, on amicable terms with the natives. Many of the houses had gardens or plots behind, enclosed by mud or conglomerate walls, this latter material being plentiful in the vicinity. In one field I noticed a Poula woman, with a tiny baby aback, slung in a many-coloured cloth, sowing the poppy, while the husband was ploughing.

We breakfasted at two o'clock, in a spot where the horsemen had unsaddled, and where there was no cover to shield us from the blazing sun. We entered Chang-na-hsien as the evening closed in, footsore, weary and very disreputable-looking, I fear; and were met by the military mandarin of the place. Unluckily the tin-chai was behind, as he too often happened to be. We had to use our most eloquent gestures to intimate to him through our boy, Akiu—one of the most imbecile

servants that traveller ever had as serving-man—our wishes and pleasure in making his acquaintance.

Our cook, a weak-legged, characterless creature of no resource, was one degree worse than Akiu! Indeed, we should have been infinitely better without the chef, for we had to coddle him on all occasions. But we could not do without him, for the tin-chai would not have deigned to travel without a cook! Our food which, at the best of times, consisted of hard-boiled eggs, pork, curry and rice and tea, might have been prepared by any one. Certainly it would have been cooked by the caravan men much better than by the chef himself.

Chang-na-hsien is a thriving town for these parts, with a number of well-to-do houses, the inhabitants being better clad than we had seen since Kwang-nan. A number of the women were very becomingly dressed.

We lodged in the most filthy inn we had yet seen. It was a dark, grimy place below, containing ponies and baggage in confusion; and above it was a dark barn, with nothing but straw as furniture for our apartment. A weary traveller wants no delicacy, and we slept like polar bears.

A touch of rheumatism which the wet weather and exposure had given me, and which had made me not a little uneasy, had now with fine weather disappeared. How anxiously I looked to the weather each day, for rain meant delay, sickness and all sorts of difficulties, to our party.

Lily feet are common not only amongst the Chinese, but also the aborigines, some of whom, in this part of Yünnan, have taken to imitating the more civilised nation. It is so comical to see a group of these rude, common peasant women, with their agricultural implements, returning from the fields, with these hideous compressed feet. The ungraceful gait of China-women, which results from this practice, is a thing of beauty in the eyes of their own countrymen. I have heard a Chinese gentleman compare the "awkward, stiff walk" of our countrywomen with the "swaying, soft gait" of his women folk. High heels are as absurd to the Chinaman as compressed feet are to us.

HONG (?) MIAOS (KAI-HUA DISTRICT, YÜNNAN).

CHAPTER XLIV.

The Papien-ho—Company — Deep furrows—Well-dressed soldiers — A pilferer foiled—Mahomedan soldiery—Gaiters—Border legends—The love-lorn tin-chai—A paying speculation—A march through valleys —Ruined fort—Lakes—Subterranean outlets—Terraced cultivation— Prosperity of the people—Beautiful situation of Kai-hua—Honorary columns—Persian water-wheel—A three-arched bridge—Curiosity of the crowd—Our inn—Dirty rooms—Chinese landscapes—Sketches of aborigines.

CLOSE by Chang-na-hsien a stream, called the Papien-ho, runs some hundred miles north, joining the northern branch of the West river. On our way from the above place we set out with a small family party. A lady on horseback had a man-servant riding in front and another behind. The latter carried a rosy-cheeked, pretty girl of some five years of age on his back. The merry little body was decked in a wonderful mass of finery, silver ornaments and fine clothes. I made friends with the men and the child, to whom I gave a pencil; but mamma was greatly affrighted, and called the servant to bring the child away. The lady was evidently well-to-do, dressed in a loose, white jacket with blue cuffs, and she had a red and black hood on her head.

The red soil was furrowed deeply by the rains, in some places to the depth of 30 feet, the whole country near Chang-na-hsien being seamed with these gullies. A troop of soldiery, in fine new uniform—blue and white being the prominent colours—made a picturesque sight, wending their way through the pine forest, with red streamers from their lances, pikes and matchlocks. They were well-fed and well-dressed rascals, with fine blue gaiters, very unlike the ragged looking, ragamuffin braves we saw on the plains, and those who usually accompanied us as escort.

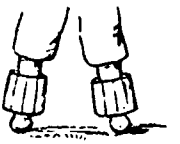
My office box was twice thrown from pony-back and dented in; and as I once caught the horsemen with it on the ground, with some tools handy, I removed all the money and valuables into a common case, screwed down, which was now carried in the chair. I have a strong suspicion that the "mafus" would have had no objection to the box opening, and the money rolling out; if it did, farewell for ever to the cash.

Our muleteers were a wild-looking lot; lanky, strong, active men, natives of Kai-hua, with straight, aquiline noses and Mahomedan features. They and many of the Kai-hua people are evidently of Mahomedan descent. Kai-hua was a great rebel camp, and a stronghold of the rebellion; and the descendants of the rebels have not all been exterminated.

The leader strongly resembled an Afghan in his build and features. Our escort—two lads—employed their time in firing their matchlocks all day long; evidently they were new to the work, and their weapons still play-

things. They were intelligent and obliging—qualities not usually found amongst the soldiery in general.

The gaiters used by every one give the appearance of elephantiasis to the legs, which looks odd at first, but one becomes accustomed to it. Goitre is not common, though it is seen. The women almost entirely monopolise the hideous ailment here.



The stories told us of the late rebellion were so exaggerated that they do not bear repetition. This border-land is full of legend and superstition; and one finds it difficult where to find the divisional factor for truth, in dealing with the absurd stories related. The commonest statement had to be most cautiously received.

The tin-chai had worn a saddened look for several days. The reason I at length discovered. He had had a love affair. It would seem that a young Lo-lo lady of great charms, some eighteen years of age, was offered him in marriage, her price being the seemingly moderate sum of ten taels or about three pounds,—a cheap figure for a young lady who was said to be good-looking, cultivated and who spoke Mandarin!

Judging from the tin-chai's eminent business proclivities, I have my doubts as to whether love, or the loss of a paying speculation, made him so deeply regret not being able to marry. However, it was impossible to humour him in this respect, and convey the young lady all the way to Rangoon, and the project had to be abandoned. He dwelt with great eloquence on her charms, but still more on the lowness of the figure asked for her!

On the 1st of April we left the moor or plateau, on which Chang-na-hsien is situated. The road took us through several small valleys and hollows, past numerous hamlets—principally Long-jen, Po-jen and Hei-jen—and small patches of cultivation.

A large valley was entered about four miles beyond our start, and then we proceeded to the right and penetrated a narrower valley. Some six miles of small valleys were skirted in all; then about two o'clock, at 5900 feet above the sea, we commenced a long descent, which was steep in parts and had a few level stretches. In the afternoon we passed a couple of ruined villages, in one of which we saw a large stone trough, about 5 feet long by 2 feet broad, hewn in limestone, and a ruined fort of considerable area, on a hill about half a mile to the left.

Three lakes were seen, during the afternoon,—one about half a mile long by 200 yards broad, and one about one mile by half a mile. The smallest was of insignificant size. None had any apparent outlet, and they were said to have none; but we noticed beyond the last lake (just before a very steep descent, so broken and rough as hardly to be passable for the ponies), a stream of water issuing through the rock. No doubt this is a subterranean outlet. This fine stream is intercepted and led away with great ingenuity round several ridges, through cut channels, and distributed over terraced fields, and lower down over the plain below. Water is thus used with great cleverness everywhere in China, but nowhere as far as we had seen so ingeniously as here.

In the forenoon pine and other trees were seen on

the hill-sides, but these become fewer as Kai-hua is approached. The country was more generally under cultivation, especially in the valleys. Poppy was still seen only in patches. The villages were numerous, and the people more prosperous and intelligent looking.

A wonderful panorama met the eye, as the descent to Kai-hua was made by our road. The town is situated in a huge valley, on the River Tsin-ho (the Rivière Claire of the French maps of Anam), which runs into the Red River, not far from the Gulf of Tonquin. The river winds like a serpent, glistening in the evening sun through the valley, which is beautifully cultivated.

The whole made a most beautiful and welcome picture after the barren moorlands just left. The river, here some thirty yards wide, opens out at times into small lakes or lagoons with islands, the valley smiling with verdant vegetation.

Kai-hua lies on the south bank, on a large bend enveloped in trees, of which there is a considerable number scattered throughout the city. On the south side of the valley, a serrated hill range runs the entire length, backed by a rounder and loftier range seemingly of granite. The valley runs south-east and north-west.

Several wei-kans, or honorary columns, were passed some few miles before Kai-hua. These stone columns were about 15 feet high and 8 inches square, and situated on the hillside, next a large area of graves,—mostly fixed in a pedestal of carved stone, but some of them in stone mounds. A small unicorn rested on the top of each column. As the town was neared, a suburb was

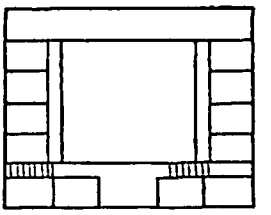
passed, and near a weir on the river a huge Persian water-wheel was seen, placed so as to throw up water into the adjacent fields.

Numerous joss-houses of solid construction lined the road, and then, crossing a three-arched bridge of solid stone covered in by wooden sides and roof, we entered the town by one of the main streets. From the crowds gathered on either side, as we made our way, we knew that we were in no Chinese city. Aboriginal features, physique and costume were seen everywhere, and the curiosity shown was greater than we had met with anywhere before.

By the time we reached the principal ma-tien of the place—a huge caravanserai—an enormous crowd, which surged in after us, made it almost impossible for us to get up to our room. When there, we were penned in and unable to move. The crowd would not be denied, even after a guard came from the yamen. They examined us, our boots, trousers and pipes (which they smoked), books, pencils, everything; and it was only by humouring them—no easy task with such undeniable and oppressive curiosity—that we kept them quiet! These mobs are very trying and, if not good-naturedly treated, might be very easily turned into a disagreeable element.

We sent our cards to the Prefect and General and, at last, worn by the day's march and the oppressive attentions of the Kai-huanese, threw ourselves on the plank-beds and soon were fast asleep. The inn, spacious as it was, bore out the character of such hostelries for filth,

which is something indescribable. A doorway, of considerable size for Yünnan, gave admittanee to a large courtyard, on three sides of which were rooms above, with stairs, narrow and insecure, while a narrow 3-ft. verandah led all round.



Our room was indescribably filthy, and had only one dirty 4-ft. square table, inlaid with grease and dirt, and two plank-beds. The rest of the furniture of the "best inn's best room" consisted of some half-dozen huge panniers, enclosing large oil-jars, and one or two empty cases, all equally dirty. Our next-door neighbours were a party of Hunan traders, who were selling Chinese landscapes of the usual pattern, poorly executed, but (according to the landlord, a most friendly and loquacious gentleman) highly thought of in Kai-hua.

His anxiety for us to admire was, perhaps, partly owing to his receiving a small percentage on purchases effected through his recommendation. We had, however, not travelled some eleven hundred miles from Canton to purchase these most uninteresting silhouettes of China landscapes! This party of traders had a busy and loud chaffering going on in their room till late at night, and the landlord proposed to make them move—a proceeding which we would not hear of, as we were prepared to fare as ordinary travellers and did not wish to figure as mighty mandarins.

Inquiries made regarding the sketches of the aboriginal tribes resulted, after judicious promises of

reward in the shape of some European gift, in the production by some subordinate of the military yamen of four of these scrolls. These contained, so my informant told me, the precious and coveted coloured representations of some twelve of the tribes to be found near Kai-hua, within a five-li circuit. I tried to bargain with him and even offered him one of four pretty small watches, which I had brought amongst other things, in case of some valuable gift being necessary at any time. He would not part with them, and said they were the only copies extant in Kai-hua, the four others, which had once existed, having been destroyed during the devastation of the Mussulman rebellion.

The one which had been in possession of the Prefect, as an official record of his yamen, had been sent, so that officer afterwards said, to the Viceroy at Yünnan-fu. I determined to interrogate the Prefect when I called, and to ask him for the loan of the precious folios for a few hours.

CHAPTER XLV.

Not up to time—Coldness of the authorities—The fruits of kindness—Topography of Yünnan—The ever-present curious ones—Wearied by the crowd—An interesting city—Entrance porches—Hei Lo-lo—Long-jens — Yeou-jens — Pou-las — Pai — Gay dresses — Curious ornaments—Pretty faces—A dangerous neighbourhood—A creditable procession—Self-fed ponies—Burmese gongs—Letters of introduction—Unreliable information—Trade routes—Cofiin-wood—Tea grown at Mali-po—Silk and cotton—Metals—Paper—Opium—Subterranean passages—Silver from Yünnan-fu.

EARLY in the morning we were awakened by the tin-chai, who came to tell me that a messenger from the Prefect had arrived, bringing his card. We were unable to receive him. So we returned a message to that effect, and added that we should do ourselves the honour of calling on him at any hour that might be convenient, say ten or twelve o'clock. I was unable to make my call at ten, the hour which the Prefect named as convenient, owing to chair-coolies not being forthcoming, and, when I got to the yamen at eleven o'clock, found him absent. I was likewise disappointed at the General's.

I was much annoyed with myself for not having kept the appointment, as my negligence might assume the aspect of want of courtesy. I had been anxious to walk to the yamen, but was informed by the tin-chai that no hour had been fixed by the Prefect's secretary. Believing this to be the case, I waited for the

chairmen and, I fear, unwillingly gave offence to the Prefect. For the first time at any place where we had exchanged cards did we receive no present of the usual pork, fowl or duck, either from him, the General, or the magistrate, who, having been absent on duty at some neighbouring village, returned during the day.

The absence of the gift—though a decided saving from a money point of view, for trivial gifts cannot be returned with any good effect—showed us that the Prefect was offended. I was extremely sorry that any misunderstanding should have occurred, for it had been our rule to preserve good and amicable relations with the mandarins and the people, in fact with every one whom we met—the true rule for travel.

Later on, we learned that the General, a friend of our acquaintance the Pe-sê Chen-t'ai, had been most anxious to see us, but was unable to depart from the line taken by the Prefect. This was one of the many instances which showed us that the military are, in all things, subordinate to the civil mandarins in Yünnan.

Of course the magistrate, who on arrival had sent his card and expressed a wish to call on us shortly, found himself unwell, and could not come that day! Next morning he hoped to be able to do so; but of course a further excuse was the result, with a profusion of apologies on account of his not feeling better. However, he sent some flour, fowls, and the usual presents, for which I returned some gifts for his children, of whom he had an abundance.

Probably not knowing that the Prefect's displeasure

had been incurred, he promised to procure and send me the official series of aboriginal sketches for the eight-li circuit round Kai-hua. He had, I found later, to request the permission of the Prefect, which was refused. The splendid power of mendacity of the Chinese enabled the magistrate to get out of the dilemma by an ingenious anecdote of the book having been sent, unknown to him, to Yünnan-fu! I knew on reliable authority—that of one of the yamen men—that the tome was safely lying in the Prefect's office!

However, it could not be helped, so I made a virtue of necessity, and spent a number of hours of the night in sketching and noting the four scrolls, of which I had got the loan. The landlord—whom a little friendliness and some quinine for his old father, who suffered badly from fever, had won over to us—was an officious friend. He likewise brought me with much secrecy and a melodramatic air, which would have made the fortune of a transpontine theatre, a book which, according to his account, was an encyclopædia of everything connected with the Kai-hua district.

I expected, from his description, to see a MS. book, but found it to be a printed volume; and I have shrewd suspicions that it was simply a volume of the general 'Topography of Yünnan,' an official work. There were some few maps, all execrably executed, and a useful list of stages between towns and villages, with some descriptions of crops, class of inhabitants and other information, but hardly anything that we could not see and note for ourselves.

We were as much amused, as he was evidently

chagrined, to find that no sooner was the door barred with a plank and the tome opened, than, by some means, some twenty people had quietly entered, and their heads were bent, with ours, over the table and discussing the contents of the book! Its examination was postponed till a later hour, with the same result! We had been compelled to place a plank, fastened by a couple of stout nails, against the door to try to keep out the crowd, but in vain. Each time a servant or messenger entered, a crowd surged in and, when this was not possible, all crevices in the walls, doors and even the window, which was approached by a narrow ledge of overhanging roof, was filled by curious eyes!

We found it very trying and, after a succession of audiences till late at night, felt more wearied than after the most severe day's march we had undergone. I was literally done up and threw myself on the bed, without making any attempt to arrange my bedding, such as it was! We found a good plan, which answered for a short time, was to select some old grey-beard out of a crowd, *combler* him with attentions, seat him, pipe him, hand him cognac, maps, books and instruments and send the younger people away. But it was only a momentary lull. We tried showing ourselves, satisfying the curiosity of the people; but it was hopeless. The traveller who cannot stay long enough to let this terrible inquisition die a natural death, must quietly submit to it!

Our guard of braves, though full of threats and shouts to the people, were the worst of all, and seemed to think they had a monopoly of us! I took the oppor-

tunity, after making my futile calls, to take a stroll round the city and see what I could. We found Kai-hua a most interesting place, by far the most so that we had yet seen. There was a quaint, yet prosperous and well-to-do air about it.

The streets are well paved and broader than usual in Chinese cities. Many of them have fine trees dotted here and there, while flowers are seen in many of the doorways, giving a pleasant look to the town. The houses are of Chinese pattern, of sun-dried brick, with stone foundations, tiled roofs and brick entrances, at many of which there was a sort of side niche, where people can sit or stand.

The city was full of the most diverse mixture of races and costumes, everything from the rough and sturdy Hei Lo-lo to the city-dweller, or itinerant Cantonese pedlar. There were the vigorous and robust Lo-lo women—with legs of a development which, for want of opportunity to detail with accuracy, I shall not describe—the neat and quaint Long-jens, the Yeou-jens, Pou-las and the Pai, each with their quaint and original national costumes. The neighbourhood teems with these people, and a great proportion of the citizens proper show traces of their descent from some one of these races.

TEOU LAO. HEI PAI.
(KAI-HUA DISTRICT).

The gay colours of the dresses, and the very great profusion of silver ornaments amongst the women, arrest attention and bespeak a considerable amount of affluence. Many of these ornaments are of the most curious and fantastic shapes, but the good looks and gay dresses of the women carry them off. Their complexions are things to envy, and many of them have nearly perfect profiles and smiling, pleasant countenances—truly a dangerous neighbourhood! I saw some faces—and I had the testimony of my companion to the same effect—which would be counted beautiful anywhere in Europe.

The men of the city were good-looking, having straight noses, less oblique eyes, with a franker appearance and bearing, than the Chinaman proper of the lowlands. The people altogether were vastly superior to any we had hitherto seen, and the city presents a strong contrast to Kwang-nan, which may be taken as an ordinary example of a Yünnan town.

During the day, the Prefect, General and all the officials, *en grand tenue*, returned from a grand review of the troops along the main street, where our inn was situated. It was a wonderful sight—a long procession of red umbrellas—we counted thirty—banners, chairs, officers on horseback and soldiers on foot.

The men were well dressed and looked better than Chinese soldiery, yet the whole procession had what (to the eye trained to our European precision and neatness) undoubtedly had a tawdry and gingerbread appearance.

The members of the procession had a peep at our window, evidently being informed as to our precise position, though they could hardly see us, as we were placed at the side.

The Chen-t'ai and other officers were all dressed in the usual Chinese military uniform, the General riding a better animal than the others, though they were all rather a sorry lot. This is no wonder, for these poor ponies have to find their own food, like the yamen lictors and other much-abused hangers-on. The gongs in the procession were of much better *timbre* than usual, quite a different article from the common Chinese gongs, being resonant and far from disagreeable; we were told that they came from Laos. They probably are of Burmese manufacture, or from the Shan country near Kiang-hung.

I had a letter of introduction to a Chinese gentleman, said to be a resident of Wen-san-hsien, which is the magistracy name of Kai-hua, but after diligent search and inquiry (it is so difficult to find out anything or anybody in these parts) could discover no trace of him. According to the most reliable information, he was said to have died some eight years before, an old man of eighty, but this did not tally with the impression which the donor of my letter had created on me. I had to give up the search, and did so with great regret, having hoped to have got much useful information from him. I had several such letters, principally to Yünnan-fu, where we were unable to go, owing to our limited time, and the capital lying out of the beat of our exploration, and therefore was unable to use one of them.

It was with regret that I found myself unable to make the acquaintance of the distinguished Monseigneur Fenouil, with whom, had we gone to Yünnan-fu, we had hoped to have held many interesting conversations. But to go was impossible, and we felt that we were fated to meet no trace of any European along our route till we reached Kiang-mai (Zimmé), which is near the British Burman territory, and where I had (while on a visit made to that Shan province in 1879) made the acquaintance of the American missionaries who reside there.

To show the degree of reliance to be placed on any information, even of purely local character, I may adduce, as a good instance, the following. The owner of the aboriginal picture scrolls and two other men, whom I interviewed separately on the subject, and whose nomenclature I wrote down separately, each gave names to the tribes, which agreed in only four or five cases out of twelve! This shows how carefully statements have to be received by the traveller in these regions.

Each account—given with an air of confidence and quite off-hand—gave me no reason to doubt the *bona fides* of my informants. The only way is to trust to your own eyes, and to ask for names and other information on the spot over and over again, when you come across people. This I invariably did, and made a series of some thirty sketches of these people in my sketch-book, which I constantly referred to. The preponderance of evidence, and the character of my informants, *gradually* led to a somewhat reliable conclusion. But the process is as difficult as sifting evidence in a hard case.

Our interview and talk over the topography book elicited no other information than that there existed no route to Tonquin, except by Manhao, which is within three days of the navigation limit of the Red River, and which Dupuis and a party of Frenchmen wish to make the entrepôt of Yünnan and foreign trade.

A considerable source of supply of foreign goods is from Hankow by the Yang-tze, S'su-chuan and Yünnan-fu, a distance roughly of 1000 miles by river and 500 miles by land caravan. The percentage on cost for carriage may be imagined! Some merchandise does come through Manhao, but the larger quantity by far comes by the West River *viâ* Pe-sê. A famous wood for coffins is got at a place ten miles from Kai-hua to the north; and next day on our march we came across a small caravan carrying this wood, cut for the purpose, slung on the pack-saddles.

The nearest place where tea is grown is at Malipo, a place 200 li, about 66 miles, distant; but Puerh tea is the favourite beverage with the affluent, and is even drunk by the poor. Silk thread and cotton stuffs, principally coloured, come from Canton by Pe-sê, and silk from Yünnan-fu.

Cotton is brought from Tonquin, *viâ* Manhao, but mainly from the Shan country *viâ* Puerh; copper from the local mine of Tu-long, said to be 200 li to the west, in the neighbourhood of Men-tzu; lead, zinc and silver from the same neighbourhood. Silver is also said to be procured, in small quantity, from a place called Maladi, 130 li to the west. The silver mines to the south, a

short distance off, and the large mine of Pai-niu-ch'ang, about halfway between Kaihua and Men-tzu, are said to have been closed since the late rebellion, and permission to re-open them, which has frequently been asked, is as constantly refused.

Quicksilver, which used to be procured from a vein some 240 li (80 miles) to the north-west near Amichou, is now said to be procured entirely, in the precise language of my informant, from "where Yünnan and Kwei-chau join"—a wide limit of many hundred miles of frontier.

Paper, coarse but strong, comes from Linan; iron, in small ingots, from Hsin-hsing, a place to the south of Yünnan-fu; tobacco from the West river. Poppy, as we had seen, is grown everywhere in patches near each village, principally for sale amongst the wealthier people and for export to the cities.

The local topography showed a subterranean passage on the local river, which is known here as the Pan-lung-ho and lower down as the Tsin-ho. This natural bridge is called the Tien-sheng-chiao, and lies close to the Tonquin frontier—some two hundred li distant. On making inquiry regarding the extent and fall of the river, we could gain no reliable information. The passage is said to be only a hundred feet long, but to have a heavy fall of water. The latter was very probable, considering the height of Kai-hua above the sea—some 5000 feet—and the short distance to the Tonquin Gulf.

Subterranean passages, at the head-waters of the rivers which have their source in Yünnan, are common. One which we passed, some ten miles from Kai-hua, will be

noticed later on. We heard of two similar ones on the head-waters of the Hung-shui-chiang, the north branch of the West river, in the neighbourhood of Amichou, which lies north of Men-tzu.

The silver used for the ornaments, so common among the Kaihuanese women, is said to come chiefly from Yünnan-fu, in the shape of pay for the soldiery! Regarding the out-turn of the mines we heard most fabulous stories, told in all seriousness but not worthy of repetition.

LONG-JEN YOUNG LADY.
(KAIHUA DISTRICT, YÜNNAN).

CHAPTER XLVI.

The murderers' cave—Quinine the best present—No boat traffic—Carts and caravans—Aqueducts—Columns and portals—Cave temples—Hwei-tu-chai—Pai women, unabashed—Inundated villages—Barren country—A natural bridge—Tien-sin-chiao—A stone bridge—Large ponds—Matang—In a police station—A lull—A desolate country—Low-lung—Un-mandarin-like conduct—Piping hot—Shy women—Sketches—People of eight tribes at market—High peaked head-dress—The Zien-tao-poula—Rich dresses—A coquette—Our, would-appear, learned tin-chai—Black-turbaned Shans—Shui-pai—Colossal legs of the Po-miao ladies—Comical head-gear—Hugger-mugger—Photographing the police—Embellishing for the Viceroy—Concrete houses—Devil-may-care soldiery—Sulkiness of the cook and tin-chai—Policy of firmness and assumed indifference.

Just before the descent to Kai-hua was made, a deep hole or cavern in the rock was seen where, our escort told us, a band of robbers once used to throw their victims—some twenty years ago—after robbing them. Our coolies, wonderful to say, turned up early, and after some delay in bidding good-bye, dispensing some gifts, chiefly quinine—the best present any traveller in Yünnan can carry, being light and highly prized—we got away. The innkeeper and petty officer in command of our guard were effusive in their farewells—the result of a present of a magnifying-glass and pencil-case.

In order to keep up appearances, here as in all cities, I used the tin-chai's chair, and C. W. one of the ponies; and we tried to look as dignified as possible as

we passed through the streets. I noticed in several shops and hong-entrances some of the gentlemen who had visited us, and in two cases received an adieu salutation.

Many people crowded to the doorways to get a farewell glimpse of the strangers, and the number of gaily-dressed and highly-ornamented women was again remarkable. As we passed towards the western gate, I saw that several traders' houses had paved passages leading to the river-side; for what purpose they are used I know not, as they have no boats for trade or for any purpose, excepting an old canoe or two for crossing the river.

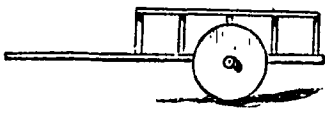
A considerable vegetable and meat market, in the road as usual, was passed before the city gate was reached; after which a suburb, running alongside the river, with a paved causeway, was skirted for some distance.

Several caravans were here observed on their way into Kai-hua. Many of the horsemen and muleteers had red turbans and light yellow bamboo hats lined with

red; they were dressed in blue jackets and loose trousers. The jackets had some twenty small buttons and strong hooks, evidently of English manufacture.

The houses in the part of the city lying *extra muros* are on strong foundations of rough rubble, on which wooden piles support the buildings.

Several bullock carts were passed, of similar construction to those noticed before, and in Kai-hua we

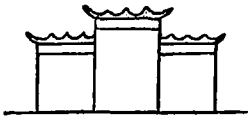


saw a string of some twenty pass one day. Some of the caravans were carrying cotton on pack mules which had come from Tonquin *viâ* Man-hao.

A suburb of the city stretches to the south, and the valley seemed well cultivated by the aid of water trained, from a higher level of the river, down the south hillside by aqueducts and distributory channels, most ingeniously constructed and worked.

A carved portal was noticed at the end of the suburban causeway, which must have been a fine work, but which was now, owing to the Mussulman rebellion, half destroyed. A cross column of stone has been propped up, and no attempt seems to have been made to repair the structure. Nothing is repaired in this strange land!

A mile farther another fine portal, in tolerable



preservation was passed, and at a farther distance of a mile and a half a pile of joss-houses and three cave temples were seen standing on the rocky hill-sides. These temples are called Sen-yeng-tong.

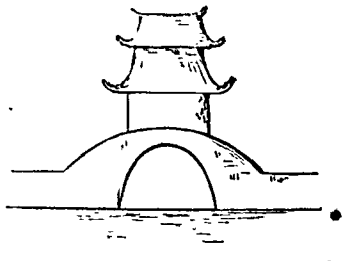
A causeway leaves the road here branching off to the right through a Pai village, called Hwei-tu-chai, where I succeeded in sketching some Pai women, who did not run away but seemed amused, and studied me as closely as I examined them.

Soon after the road leaves the valley, which has several villages dotted about it, and proceeding alongside the river, here very tortuous, ascends a gorge in the hills to the left, turning a hill soon afterwards, and running north-west over bare red-soiled rocky ground. Some of the hamlets in the valley are surrounded by water, and can only be approached by the stone causeways.

For the next five miles—after which the subterranean passage named the Tien-sheng-chiao, alluded to before, is met—the country was barren and desolate, and only here and there, in some low-lying hollow, could a patch of poppy or rice be found. A few straggling, wretched pine-trees appeared on the hill-sides.

The subterranean passage is under a rocky roadway—a ridge between the hills—and a very narrow gorge, some 200 feet high and averaging 30 feet broad, takes the river to the south past Kai-hua. No sign of any water was to be seen anywhere just above the passage. The rocks have limestone cave formations and are precipitous. A few hundred yards beyond, the village of the same name was passed.

In the afternoon we crossed the stream by a fine stone bridge, some 25 feet span and 40 feet high, with a double-roofed building over it, having the usual upturned eaves. The ground-floor walls were of wretched sun bricks, the rest was of wood, the roof being tiled. The woodwork was,



as usual, execrably executed, though the building looked effective enough at a distance.

Immediately after making a small steep ascent, we entered an undulating hilly country, and came to several small lakes (or ponds), the largest 1500 feet in length by 500 feet in breadth. Passing the stream again by a 20-feet span bridge, and crossing the valley, we gained our halting-place Matang.

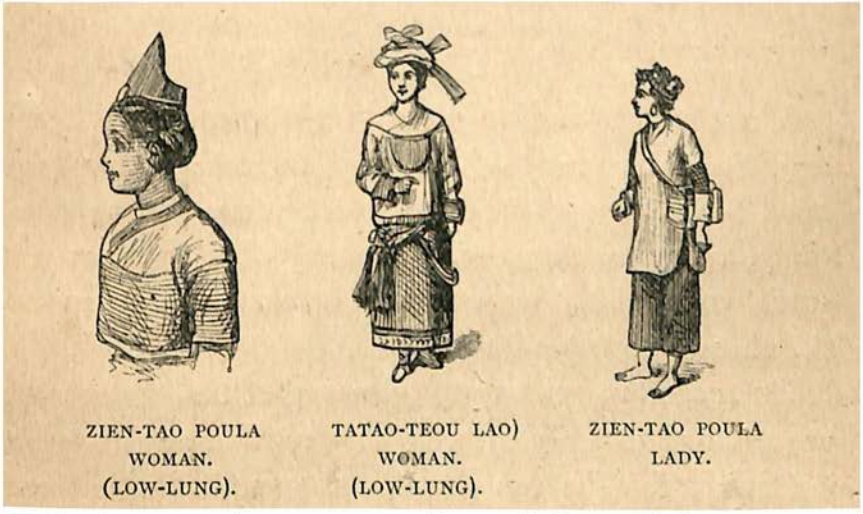
We obtained quarters in the police-station, a new and therefore tolerably clean building. For this privilege we were indebted to the Kai-hua magistrate. The police-officer actually kept the crowd from the precincts, and we had a deliciously quiet evening and rest—quite a lull after the stormy interviews of Kai-hua.

On the 4th of April, our short march of 13 miles was over bare, undulating, red—soil, hilly country, with no vegetation to speak of, the whole aspect being most desolate. We met nothing in the shape of a human habitation *en route*, except two small, wretched hamlets. Low-lung, with a police-station at which we halted, is a market-town and only remarkable for being so. We were lucky enough to arrive on market-day, and the police-officer volunteered to escort us to the fair. We had great difficulty in persuading him to do away with the lictors, and allow the peasantry to move about and crowd round us as they chose. It was most un-mandarin-like conduct!

The heat during our march had been great and trying, cased in as we had been by the hills, the red soil of which reflected the heat, so it required an effort to take

the camera and sketch-book, and make our way to the market. We did make the effort, however, and were well rewarded for our exertion. There was a most interesting collection of people, and we spent two hours prowling about, making sketches and inquiries. It was comical to see how the women ran away when they thought we were looking at them, and how amused they looked when they fancied we were studying their neighbours! Rochefoucauld was right, and there *is* something pleasant in the misfortunes of one's friends!

Zien-tao Poula, Long-jen (peasantry and better class), Tatao-teou Lao, Shui Pai, Po Miao, Shauzi Poula, Teou Lao, Poula, Han-jen were all there collected; but the Long-jens were the most numerous. They pleased us here, as they had done before, by their simple,



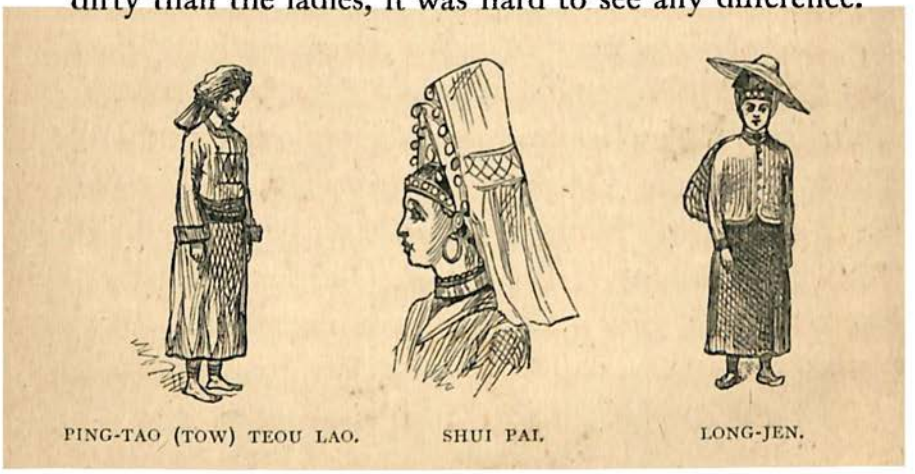
ZIEN-TAO POULA WOMAN. (LOW-LUNG).

TATAO-TEOU LAO) WOMAN. (LOW-LUNG).

ZIEN-TAO POULA LADY.

frank faces, and neat, cleanly and beautiful costume. The Pai were remarkable for a high head-dress, twice the height of the face above head, and for the two rows of silver ornaments in the front. The Zien-tao Poula

(peasant women) had a black, peaked cap stuck on the top, or rather on the back, of the head, with a red ornament. Several "ladies" of the same race were dressed as shown in sketch. Their hair was very light brown, but except from the mode of wearing it, and the fact that the peasant women were slightly less dirty than the ladies, it was hard to see any difference.



PING-TAO (TOW) TEOU LAO. SHUI PAI. LONG-JEN.

The greater number of market-women were Long-jens, several young ladies being remarkable for their good looks, and rich, yet tasteful, attire. One especially, a tiny creature, with a light yellow bamboo hat stuck coquettishly on one side of the head, as in the sketch, was most bewitching.

I managed to get a rough drawing of her, though the process had to be protracted and conducted with great ingenuity, for she ran away each time I had a good opportunity of sketching. She turned out to be the village heiress as well as belle, the owner of many broad poppy-fields, quite a prize in the matrimonial market! Our cicerone, the police-officer, was eloquent

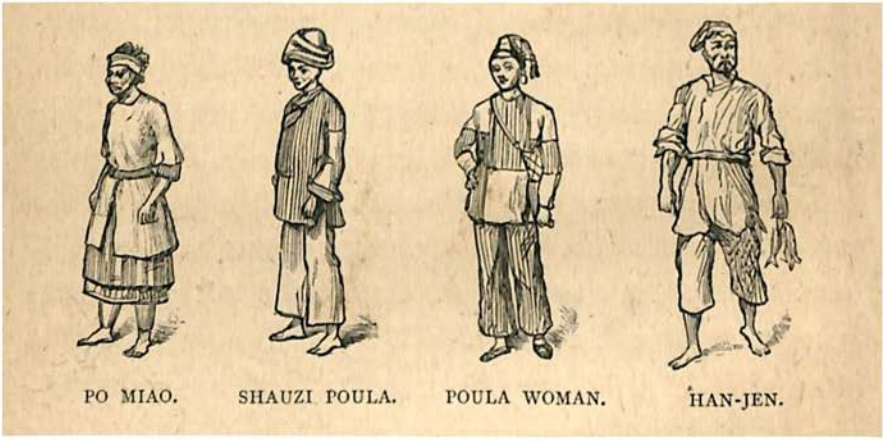
on the subject on our return to our dwelling, and wished to introduce us. But as we were hurried for time, and not considering ourselves eligible *partis*, we had to decline, though the visit would have been pleasant enough.

The tin-chai's face fell at this, and I have no doubt he might have entered himself in the list of wooers, if we had stayed. He might have been considered a catch, as a *lettré* (one who had "entered the grove of Hanlin"), the which he had tried to make these Yünnanese believe. The Hanlin is the Pekin Academy, somewhat like the Sorbonne of Paris. Our friend's airs, in conversation with the people, were amusing and we occasionally overheard diverting scraps. On this occasion some yokel, amongst the *levée* of all the village society held in the police-office, said that he had seen a European in Lin-an ten years ago. This was probably Dupuis or some member of the French Commission; but the tin-chai, with a most sapient air, remarked, "Ah, yes, that must have been Marco Polo!" He had overheard us often talk of the illustrious traveller, and no doubt impressed his audience quite as much as if he had not made such a ludicrous mistake as to post-date the travels of the great Venetian some half-dozen centuries.

The Tatao-teou Laos, with their enormous black turbans, were remarkable figures. Their faces, though plain, are frank, honest and engaging. Some of them wore white turbans, as they were in mourning. The Shui Pai, with their huge peaked caps of black, with an enormous flap behind, the front being richly ornamented with two rows of silver ornaments, and a band covered

with silver braid across the forehead, were picturesque figures.

The Po Miaos, with their strip of dark blue cloth wound round the head, dirty white coats, blue petticoats in many thick folds, were the most primitive of any tribe yet seen, and even they did not deserve the name of savage, which the Chinese apply to all who are not of their stock, including ourselves. Their countenances are heavy and their features coarse, but the most remarkable feature about them is the colossal size of their legs.



PO MIAO. SHAUZI POULA. POULA WOMAN. HAN-JEN.

A Shauzi Poula woman with her husband, selling fowls, was a picturesque figure, the headdress quaint and pretty. By the Poulas turbans were worn something like a hussar's cap on the left side of the top of the head, the greater portion of the head being uncovered.

A ragged and wild-looking Han-jen, with an enormous goitre, was selling fish; and Teou-lao horsemen and basket-porters, who had brought wares to market in

baskets slung on their backs, as also Po Miao men, wild-looking creatures in masses of rags, carrying vegetables, were to be seen in numbers.

The discipline of the braves (yung) was evidenced during the day we spent here. The men and officers associating promiscuously in one room, messed together, and thought nothing of flatly contradicting each other. Two or three of the officers lay huddled up together on one bed, while the men sat near, talking at the top of their voices, making a picture of disorder which astonished us, prepared, as we were, to find no great strictness of discipline.

Opium-smoking is a vile habit, and attacks the moral before it ruins the physical qualities. The police officers were pleasant, and C. W. photographed two groups of them, as well as attempted several of the aborigines in the market-place. The officers seemed highly delighted, and we promised to send them copies in about a year's time—a long time to wait, but which seemed rapidity to them!

The next day we discovered the reason of the comparative cleanness of the police offices between Kai-hua and Mentzu. They are, as I suspected, only a year old and were built, or "run up" when it was known that the Viceroy intended last year to proceed that way to the capital. The roads were patched up at the same time. Yünnan is not the only country where I have known bungalows repaired and roads put in order to facilitate the progress of Viceroys, or that of other high officials!

Most of the houses are made of rough concrete, clay and some lime, laid in layers of one foot in height, and boxed in and pounded much as we do ours. Rough as the work is, it seems to resist the weather and stand well.

Here we had further evidence of the discipline of the braves. Our escort had no sooner joined us and gone a couple of miles than they disappeared, and we never saw them again. A heavy shower of rain, which drenched us, drove them away not to return. I was naturally indignant, but was told there was no good complaining. Such was the custom and they only feared the General at Kai-hua, who could, if he chose, punish them.

In addition to rain, other difficulties arose. The cook became sullen and wanted to return, as he said he could not stand the fatigue of the journey, though he travelled on a pony and we on foot. The horsemen gave us endless trouble and, lastly, the tin-chai got also sulky and rude in his manner. The fatigue was undoubtedly telling on the men, and the rapidity of our movements was little to their liking. They wished to halt at every considerable place. Firmness and a show of indifference as to the caprices of followers generally conquers, and this I found answered with them. If the cook wished to return, he might do so; but I suggested that 400 miles across country on foot, with no soldiers and no mandarin master, would hardly be to his liking.

The horsemen I had complete command over, as I

held their written agreement, which I had obtained before leaving Kai-hua. This practice I recommend strongly to all future travellers in the case of all servants employed. The tin-chai was the greatest difficulty we had to deal with, as he was indispensable and knew his own value.

I determined, notwithstanding, to push on and have no delays, if possible, for in twelve days' time I hoped to be in the Shan country when, speaking the Burmese language, which is there understood, I hoped to be their absolute master, while they would be entirely dependent on *me*. Vexatious circumstances such as these are very trying, and have to be met patiently and firmly.

LONG-JEN FÊTE. YOUNG BACHELORS SERENADING LADIES (KAI-HUA DISTRICT).

CHAPTER XLVII.

Ascents and descents—Road through high valleys—Treeless country—Prairie land with hummocks—Romantic situation of Shauzia—Poppies—Irrigation—Nia-la-chon—Spare diet in heavy rain—The source of an illness—The end of the prairie—Flat-roofed villages—Zigzags down a mountain—The Mentzu plain—Geological formation—Deep gullies—Dense mists—Flagging servants—Unculturable red soil—A civil mandarin—Our reception robes—Mentzu an entrepôt of trade—Complaining to the magistrate—Dilapidated roads and bridges—Paucity of religious buildings—A market—Teou-laos and Pai women—Jolting carts and ponies—A youthful mob—Water troughs—A resting-place—A lake—A short cut.

ON the 5th of April the road was much the same as hitherto, skirting valleys of varying length and breadth, and crossing the ridges between them, ascent and descent being made time after time. There was comparatively little cultivation in the valleys except near Nia-la-chon and Meenju. At midday we entered a country in which, on either side of the road itself—here about 7500 feet—towered lofty hills with easy slopes. There were no trees at this height, and only grass. Grass-clad hills and valleys brought us to Meenju, after a trying march of twenty-five miles.

For the first part of the day we passed through undulating ground, with detached hills or hummocks. In

one of these, shortly after leaving Matang, we noticed a tunnelled cavern pierced through the hill a little below its summit. Three miles farther on we came to several Long-jen

villages, situated in a large valley, one of which, named Shauzia, is romantically situated, with smiling fields in front, at the foot of a perpendicular cliff. This grand background, together with the beautiful wooding round the village, and the sparkling stream with its fine stone bridge in picturesque disrepair, completes a landscape that an artist would rejoice over.

A subterranean passage, through which one arm of the stream which traverses the valley flows, is said to exist here, but I had not time to return and visit it, as I only heard of its existence when we were some miles past the place. A couple of miles beyond this we turned north-west, ascending a ridge and skirting valleys where, as was the case during the whole day, the beautiful white, pink, and purple poppies were plentiful, nodding on their long flexible stalks.

Six miles further on brought us to Nia-la-chon, where also there was poppy cultivation over the whole valley, and halfway up the high hillsides. The water from far away up the valley is diverted and distributed by irrigating channels over the hill and valley. A small ruined fort stands near the village, on a small bluff above the stream. We had good cause to remember the poppy valley of Nia-la-chon, on account of one of the little contretemps which give variety, by no means of a pleasant sort, to travel. Our horsemen, with all our baggage, had gone away out of our sight, against our express orders, and we had to sit down in the pelting rain with what appetite we had, and breakfast off hard eggs and cold tea—rather a dispiriting menu after twelve

miles' hard march. The wetting we got throughout this long day laid the seeds of a sickness, against which I had to fight when it developed itself, as it did within the next few days.

In the afternoon, just after passing some Miao and Moozi Poula hamlets (wretchedly poor places of mud and rubble, situated at a height of 7500 feet, with hills all around about another 1000 feet above them), we passed through the last part of the prairie, and approached Meenju by a short-cut winding alongside the dry bed of a stream.

The first half of the next day we continued skirting the usual valleys, the first three or four of them being well cultivated, and poppy abundant; afterwards we entered a bare, red soil country, with hills but no cultivation or villages. Early in the day we passed the first of a number of flat-roofed villages, which we saw near Mentzu, and many of which we met later on. We had in several villages seen instances of flat-roofed buildings, but none with roofs of this pattern. About two o'clock we reached the highest point of our day's march, 7,500 feet.

A sudden descent, and quite as sudden a rise, brought us to the summit of the easterly ridge, bordering the Mentzu plain, which was barely visible through a thick mist. It seemed to be a huge valley, with a large area at the southern end under cultivation. Zigzag curves took us down into the valley, and then a very winding road over a causeway made the approach to the town amazingly long.

The strata seemed to be limestone, sandstone and conglomerate, and a poor kind of slate, but it was impossible to see where each occurred *in situ*. Small quantities of quartz were found, but no granite. A number of deep fissures or gullies, cut out by the rains in the red soil, were frequently observed. Some were 100 feet deep and constantly cutting away, and many were dangerously close to the track, which is "retired" as the gullies cut in. Beautiful specimens of masses of conglomerate were met with.

The mists, for the greater portion of the day, were very trying, and necessitated our keeping the party—which consisted of nine horses, four horsemen, twelve coolies, four policemen, our servants and ourselves—well within sight, or rather close together. Several times one or other of us nearly lost our way, and we had to keep the flagging servants up to the mark. Muff, the cook, looked very unhappy—more unhappy than usual!

The mist partly cleared several times during the day, allowing us vistas of valley or hillside that presented no variety or features of interest. We should have had a magnificent view of the Mentzu plain but for the mist; but it was all we could do, as we approached, to make out the city, and the nearer half of the plain with the rice fields and enormous sheets of water.

After reaching the undulating valley level, we found the greater portion of the ground on the north side was composed of a red soil, not available for cultivation, as it cannot, by the Chinese methods, be irrigated. On approaching nearer, smiling crops and water-covered

fields were seen everywhere with Teou-lao women and men busy at work, the women making an animated contrast to the scene with their gay and picturesque costumes.

TEOU LAO (MEN-TZU DISTRICT).

A police officer, who had been sent by the magistrate, met us some eight miles from the city. He brought a very civil message from the mandarin in charge, who had placed an unused yamen, next his own, at our disposal. A small crowd gathered round us as we entered, and by the time we reached the yamen it had swollen to an undesirable size. The official subordinate at our request managed to keep them out of our dwelling, and we were able to get a little quiet.

The yamen was in the most dilapidated condition—a curious, rambling old place, deserted except by a huge flock of paddy birds, who had made some large trees next the entrance their home. The magistrate occupied it until lately as a school-house for his one son, a boy of some five or six years, but now it was no longer used for anything, except it be for the very occasional traveller, a *rara avis* like ourselves.

We had no sooner got into the dark, dirty-looking edifice—in which everything was going to ruin, but which had been a fine series of buildings—and placed our slender kit and beds on the plank-beds, than the mandarin, to whom we had sent our cards, sent his card-bearer to say he would call immediately.

We had to finish our bath quickly, and hurry into our ulsters, which were our reception robes. Then the

great man of the place turned up. He was a pleasant, very good-natured and chatty old gentleman. He brought his son with him. When he kindly expressed a hope that we would stay some time in the place, we replied that we were obliged to go on at once, as we feared the rains in the Shan country. He pressed us to remain three, two or, failing that, at least one day. Coolies could not be got ready, he assured us, for the next day's march and we must stay one day, and he promised to give us guides to show us the lions. We were sorry to deny him, but were obliged to be firm. He sent us a supply of poultry, and we returned such gifts as we could, and I delighted him greatly by giving the small boy a German silver pencil-case.

Mentzu is a large, rambling place, not so fine or well-to-do as Kai-hua, and not nearly so picturesque. In fact it is uninteresting except from being the entrepôt of a considerable transit trade from Manhao and the Shan country to different parts of the province. On this account large ma-tiens are numerous, and a considerable portion of the trade depends on the caravan people. Several joss-houses, an examination hall and one or two guild-halls, complete the list of public edifices, and, though of the ordinary type, they form a contrast to the poor buildings which constitute the dwellings of the townspeople.

The roadways are very dirty, and in this respect differed from those of Kai-hua. The city lies encircled by trees and orchards in the middle of a cultivated plain. Should Manhao ever develop into what Dupuis

and many of the French expect it to become, Mentzu will of course benefit thereby. It is well situated as a centre of distribution.

On the 7th of April, next day, we commenced our march by going northwards for nearly 10 miles, to the border of the large lake, which lies at the north end of the plain. We were very late in starting, owing partly to our horsemen and partly to the coolies, who did not make their appearance till eleven o'clock.

The horsemen I disposed of by paying a visit to the magistrate with the agreement. He lectured them severely, and plainly told them that they were being treated by me as no Chinaman would have done. They had been very troublesome, and rightly or wrongly, I put down their cross-grained and nasty ways to their Mahomedan origin. Their looks, when I gained my point, were by no means friendly.

On leaving the town through the north gate, we passed several fine carved stone portals in the same damaged state to which they were reduced a dozen years ago. Many fragments of these once fine structures are scattered about the roadway.

We found here, as we did in other places, the remains of monuments and public works, such as bridges and causeways, in a state of crumbling ruin and decay. The power that once created these costly and extensive works no longer exists; and no one now remains with sufficient influence to encourage or order their repair.

The bridges are a picture of ruin. In some cases the

arch has been swept away; in others the massive parapet is found lying in the centre of the roadway; the carving of every stone portal is destroyed and the upper cross-stone broken and still lying where it fell.

The causeway, once in good repair, is now in a state of dilapidation, broken up by the traffic, and undermined and damaged by the rains. In some cases slabs have been taken away by the people, to form the foundation of their houses or garden walls; and the road has become a torrent bed. Yamens and joss-houses are seen alongside the thoroughfare, ruined and abandoned. Such sights as these prove the degeneracy and the weakness of the present rule.

It is most significant that in Yünnan we nowhere saw anything under repair or being renewed. A very few structures, mainly dwellings, are seen by the traveller in course of construction but nothing is ever repaired. The small number of temples met with since we left the eastern side of the Yünnan is remarkable, and we only saw one instance of a pagoda—at Kwang-nan—and even that was a poor structure. On the West river we saw at least twenty.

The open market-place within the gateway was thronged with peasantry; market people who had brought their stores to sell, and people chaffering. It presented a very animated scene, brightened by the gay colours of the Teou Laos and Pai women. At the back of the market-place were ranged some thirty buffalo and bullock carts; some of the drivers of which had lit fires close by, and were cooking.

The articles being sold in the market were chiefly vegetables, tobacco and common paper, and all sorts of odds and ends required for Yünnan life. The shops do the chief trade, and there is a considerable number of them.

As we proceeded along the plain numbers of carts, carrying produce, and peasantry, principally women, passed us on their way to the town. The carts are similar to those we had before met. They are rudely built and have wheels varying from 18 inches to 3 feet in diameter — 2 feet 3 inches being the usual size. They jolt terribly, even on the smooth plain road. This I can personally vouch for, having accepted a Teou Lao driver's invitation, and tried the comfort of his cart for five minutes, over a very fair piece of road.

There was not much to choose between the pleasure of riding one of our ponies and indulging in the cart; on both you were shot about in the most sudden way, until your bones ached! Hundreds of these vehicles, to which buffaloes and oxen were harnessed, were met by us during the day.

A large mob of urchins and youngsters followed us out of the town. But our rapid pace, together with no notice being taken of them and the hot sun overhead, soon made them tire of the amusement, and they all suddenly dropped off on our coming to some rude seats underneath a wide-spreading tree.

On the left-hand side, a mile and a half from the town, a cemetery is met with, close by which a large stone

water-trough, measuring 4 feet by 2 feet, stands under a tree on a solid block of stone. This useful institution is for the use of the numerous passers-by.

A fine paved causeway leads from the town. In some places it is badly broken up, and in others it is lost altogether, and then resumed farther on.

A couple of miles from the city, a large village called Pe-ma is passed on the left hand, and a mile farther on a village of sixty houses, named Shu-li-fu, on the right.

There is a joss-house near the entrance to the latter village. Immediately after this we saw a second stone water-trough, where a number of picturesquely attired muleteers and horsemen were resting. Several were dressed in a white turban, jacket and loose trousers, with a red sash round the waist, and a red cloth lining round the inside of the head-

frame of the bamboo sun-hat. These hats had silver or brass ornamentation at the top, generally the former. Some had flowers, white and red in colour, placed on either side of the red lining.

Beyond the village a large portion of the plain remains uncultivated, the ground being undulating and too high for irrigation. The large lake, several miles in length, and of an average breadth at the western end of half a mile, approaches the road. Here a long paved causeway, with only eight openings, which saves those going to Yünnan from a long détour, is met with. This is the stone bridge, of some twenty arches mentioned by Rocher; but as the causeway is a poor affair, with

merely cross-openings of varying size and shape, to let the water pass through, it hardly deserves the name of bridge.

HEI TEOU LAOS (KAI-HUA DISTRICT, YÜNNAN).

[*Note by Author.*—The Ping-tao Teou Laos seen by us had much the same dress as the above, but they had a coloured scarf round the waist, green cuffs, dark-blue gaiters, with a green border at top.]

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Linked lakes—Absence of hydraulic works—A high hill—Harassing winds—Vexations—Difficulties of hiring coolies—Flat-roofed villages—Chee-kai—Small-built highlanders—Characteristics of the Mahomedans—Pigs on the loose—A salvo—Too much servility—A grand reception—A good dinner—Quinine, a prized present—Necessity of gifts—Avoiding suspicion—Our vicissitudes.

OUR road to Linan took us past the southern side of the lake which we skirted after passing the causeway. The lake, narrows to about a couple of hundred yards, near the villages of Tsan-leen and Yee-go-paw, and soon after becomes shallow; the end being protected by a rubble wall having an opening in it for the passage of a stream which enters it at that place. Soon after this and before reaching Yee-go-paw,—a village of some hundred houses,—another huge expanse of water is seen, lying half a mile to the south.

This lake seems to be separated from the other by a high rising ground or large spreading knoll, which we skirted on the northern side. A small outflow channel is crossed leading the surplus water from the southern to the northern lake. No boats are in use on the lakes, as far as we could see or learn, though deep enough for shallow craft, such as canoes.

Some simple and cheap appliance for pumping might render fertile a large area of the plain, which is at present

uncultivated. The sparse population does not at present call for such engineering works, indeed however dense it might be, I do not think such a work would be undertaken. The idea of raising water 20 feet, except in the one solitary instance at Kai-hua, does not seem to occur, so far as our experience goes, to any one in Yünnan.

The highest hill in the range surrounding the Mentzu plain, is seen to the south in the afternoon. It is apparently some 2000 feet higher than the plain.

A winding road through a bare barren country, for some five miles, brought us to a valley of considerable area, in which untilled rising grounds form the central position, on which stand several villages at one of which, named Chee-kai, we halted. The windings, as we neared our resting-place, were heartrending, what seemed a mile in distance, being converted, by constant and reasonless turns, into a good hour's march. We reached it, footsore and exhausted, having marched through the heat of the day, after a whole forenoon spent in the vexatious operation of waiting for coolies and settling, in a fashion little to their liking, the rapacious demands of our horsemen.

Nothing is more wearying and trying than these worries, which form so large an item in Chinese travel. If we could have secured a gang of coolies or porters, under a Fu-t'ou or headman, hired from a regular Fu-hong or coolie establishment, we should have been saved a great deal of this bother.

The system in use elsewhere in China does not seem to be in force in South Yünnan. We often made efforts,

but always in vain, to get coolies in this fashion. From place to place all carriage seems to be conducted by horse or mule, for the hire of which animals there are plenty of establishments.

Unfortunately, we could not do without coolies, as they were necessary for the tin-chai's chair, for our daily mid-day meal, and for the carriage of our instruments. We tried to induce the interpreter to ride, but the exercise was not to his liking and,—walking being out of the question for so important a personage,—he held to his chair. It was a great nuisance but, as he was necessary, we had to humour him in this particular.

Most of the villages we passed on the Mentzu plains, and as far as the Lin-an valley, were flat-roofed, and the rains therefore probably are not heavy in these parts. Some of these villages seen from a distance reminded me much of similar ones in Upper India.

The walls were generally of limestone rubble, laid in alternate rows pointing downwards at opposite angles, and packed with mud or clay for cement. The framework for the doors and the beams for the roof were of the roughest uncut round timbers, the terraced roof was formed of a concrete mass roughly laid, with a slight incline and with drainage pipes constructed of tiles. The village of Chee-kai and those in its vicinity are inhabited chiefly by Teou-laos.

These people seem to be very poor, notwithstanding their gay, effective and substantially made costumes. Several habitations, near Chee-kai, were merely rounded

cabins, some 6 feet in height and 10 feet in diameter, into which admittance was gained by a small 3-feet doorway, a most terrible abode for any human being. Yet the people seem to be cheerful, and, though their food is little else than rice, eaten often without salt, and occasionally with a few coarse vegetables, they seem to be sturdy and able-bodied.

We have seen no men of large and fine build, such as we expected to find in these highlands. Besides our horsemen all those mentioned as bearing traces of Mahomedan blood have the same characteristics,—long, lanky frames, straight nose, oval faces and a more commanding look but less agreeable expression than the other Yünannese. The reason of the lack of really fine men is no doubt to be found in the hard life and wretchedly poor food of the peasantry, and in the fact that the well-to-do people all use opium. No fine race can result from such conditions.

In the Mentzu plain we noticed a curious spectacle, which from some little distance we could not at first understand. A vast number of black objects were running about in the fields. These turned out to be a huge number of pigs, big and small; whole families let loose to grub up some roots which the Teou-laos were loosening for them. In one field, of no great extent, we counted over one hundred. It was a curious sight! Evidently the pigs were having a "good time," as they snorted and rushed about, burrowing their noses in the ground with every sign of satisfaction. We often saw pigs similarly employed in the subsequent part of our journey.

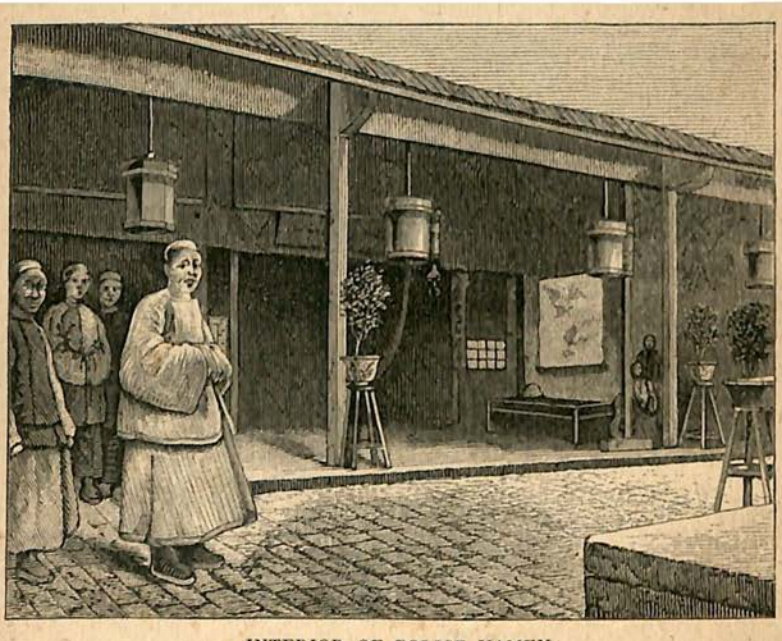
Our friendly relations with the magistrate at Mentzu had procured us a letter from him which had been sent ahead to the police officer at Chee-kai. This gentleman came out to meet us some six miles from that place. He was surrounded by a number of the force, who greatly astonished us by firing off a salvo from their

POLICE AND MILITARY OFFICER AND ESCORT.

matchlocks as we approached. The men were in full uniform, and the officer had brought out with him an elegant chair, of Chinese manufacture, in imitation of some European folding-chair, to serve the double purpose of seating himself till we arrived, and ourselves afterwards.

The account which our friend the magistrate had

given of us must have been highly coloured, for the police officer's politeness knew no bounds. He went down on his knees, and it was with difficulty that we succeeded in inducing him to rise. Later in the evening we blushed for very shame when this polite officer, who was a courtier full of punctiliousness, insisted against our wish, in according us, on our arrival at the entrance of the village, another ovation and salute.



INTERIOR OF POLICE YAMEN.

A red umbrella was held over our heads, quite irrespective of the fact that the sun had long set! We tried to look as if we were quite accustomed to red umbrellas and salutes, and did our best to assume the air of indifference which is necessary to the bearing of your true mandarin. Our honours however were not to cease here; for no sooner were we within the police yamen,

than Puerh tea, a most choice and grateful beverage, was served. Along with it came hot water, with a clout—whose colour had better not be mentioned—in order to mop our faces. Our interpreter and servants arriving, we were next ushered into another chamber to partake of a Chinese dinner, which had been prepared for us.

Of course politeness compelled us to assume an air of eagerness to try the Chinese viands, which, though famishing, we were far from feeling. Our Canton dinner experiences obtruded themselves on us. But judge our surprise when each of us was served with a bowl containing a good thick soup—the strong point of Chinese cookery—some excellent fowl stew or curry, and delicious cold fowl cut up in thin slices, and of course there was rice.

We had expected, and so evidently had our interpreter and servants, judging from their faces, to have made an effort to taste several dishes, with as good a show of relish as possible. What actually happened was that we half finished the stew of fowl, with a liberal allowance of rice. In fact we dined heartily off a most appetising dinner, and wished our cook would take a lesson thereby.

The astonishment, and no doubt chagrin, of our following may be imagined. The police officer had asked them to dine with him, probably thinking that we would refrain from the viands. We had, in fact, been eating their dinner! However, it saved the cook the trouble of preparing our evening food, which seldom deserved the name of dinner. It might more properly

be termed "taming sah," the Burmese expression for eating rice,—their ordinary meal.

Next morning the police officer accompanied us some half-dozen miles on our way, and on parting I gave him some of the small gifts we had, such trifles as are greatly prized in these parts, of which quinine is the most esteemed. Luckily we had required to use little of this invaluable medicine amongst our party, and a part of our large stock had been more agreeably employed in making presents. For trifling gifts quinine, cigarettes and pencil-cases, with quantities of leads, may safely be recommended. More substantial presents,—such as compasses, magnifying-glasses and field-glasses—were reserved for important occasions. A considerable number of gifts is necessary for any traveller who does not keep aloof from the officials—a plan which we saw no reason to adopt.

The letters sent by General Li from Pe-sê to many of his former comrades, civil and military, had secured us nearly everywhere a most friendly reception, while of course it gave us the greatest pleasure to try to create a friendly impression.

By avoiding all questions about mines and the riches of the soil, regarding which we should have learnt nothing from the officials, and allowing our survey books, instruments and photographing apparatus to be freely inspected, we managed to avoid incurring any needless amount of suspicion on the part of the officials, if we did not succeed in securing their confidence.

The number of officials who had consented to our

photographing them and their yamens showed the friendly footing which we had succeeded in maintaining with them. This, too, in spite of the fact that we could not halt long enough to satisfy their curiosity, and develop the pictures for them to see!

The letters which we received from the General secured us the advantage of seeing both the official and non-official side of travel. In one place we were received by the mandarins, in the next left to shift for ourselves; in one place we were housed in some yamen, receiving presents, guards and visits from the local mandarin; in the next we found ourselves minus all these. At times we were elbowed in the inn and experienced all the annoyances for which the ordinary traveller must be prepared in China,—the worst of all being perhaps the familiarity to which one is occasionally subjected.

TEOU LAOS (KAI-HUA DISTRICT, YÜNNAN).

CHAPTER XLIX.

Ravages of the rebellion—Irrigated valleys and sandy downs—Limestone, sandstone and conglomerate—Knocked up—Proposed journey—Expected difficulties at the frontier—A wind-storm—Mien-tien—Opium-smoking—Strange bedfellows—A companionable pig.

On the north side of the valley in which Chee-kai lies, a village larger than the others, Shatien and numerous hamlets are situated. Shatien is seen about a mile to the north, at the foot of the low range of hills. Like other places in this neighbourhrod, it is of no great importance, depending entirely on agriculture. It suffered the fate of so many others in the terrible Mahomedan rebellion, and many more years will be required before its monuments of ruined villages, razed joss-houses and broken portals will be hidden by the garment that time so kindly throws over the ravages of men. It was entirely inhabited by Mahomedans, and has paid the penalty of their nationality.

Mentzu is a hsien, or sub-prefecture, under the Lin-an department. The road wound on the 8th of April through valleys. The lowest hollows, at the foot of sandy downs, much broken up by nullahs, were under irrigation. The low hills on either side did not exceed 800 feet in height. About mid-day the sandy downs disappeared, and the road proceeded amongst hills,

displaying highly cultivated and irrigated little valleys at their foot.

Cultivation largely increased as we approached Mien-tien, our halting-place; and the hills, which in the morning were exceedingly bare, became more clothed with trees of various kinds. Little pine was visible, and that was of the poorest description. Conglomerate became the ruling formation in the afternoon, with limestone and sandstone here and there.

During this march, I had to be carried in the sedan-chair for the first and only time, all the instruments and papers which generally were in it being taken by coolies. I was feeling far from well, suffering from the effects of my wetting some few days back. This was very dispiriting, and I feared its effect on the men. I determined to try rest for a couple of days at Lin-an, and to endeavour to recover thoroughly, so as to be able to stand the long march before us. For this repose I was all the more anxious, as my companion had been frequently indisposed, not being so hardy as myself.

From Lin-an I hoped to be able to reach the Nam-ho or Hou-kiang—which on the French maps is shown as about a week's march from Talan or Yuan-chiang—but whether this would be possible or not, events would have to show. Should it be possible, fifteen days' steady marching would be necessary from Lin-an before we could reach boats, which I hoped to secure on the Nam-ho, and at that point penetrate a perfectly unexplored region, the easternmost part of the independent Shan country.

This stream would possibly carry us down to Luang-prabang, on the Mékong, from which place we should have to make our way through the Siamese Shan country (Zimmé) to British Burma. Our greatest difficulties would undoubtedly occur on trying to cross the Chinese border into the Shan country.

The Chinese officials would not then assist us, while the Burmese mandarins, a most suspicious lot—whom I thought to be still in Laosland but who, as we afterwards learned, had been turned out—would not receive us with any willingness. They might perhaps detain us, as they had done the members of the French Commission twelve years ago. I was without Burman passports from the Court of Mandalay, as I had considered it wiser not to demand them. They might not have been refused; but in any case time would have been given to advise the local officials of my coming and perhaps to give instructions to stop us, which very probably would have been done. Once in Laosland I could depend on our being English, on my speaking Burmese and on our coming from China!

A heavy wind-storm came on some few miles before reaching Mien-tien and compelled me to forsake my chair and take to my legs, although at the cost of getting wet again,—the worst thing for me.

Our lodgment was in the best stable-inn, the largest place of several in the village, through which there is a large traffic, which would not be expected from the state of the roadway. The inn resembled others we had stayed in, particularly the one at Kai-hua, but there were no

rooms upstairs,—only an open floor surrounded the yard below.

A number of travellers were lying about on the floor, and several were huddled up on a bed in the corner enjoying the "black smoke." Nothing more disgusting than this sight, which we so often saw, can be imagined.

There were, on this occasion, some three or four men lying about, half stupid with opium, and with hardly vigour enough left to raise their pipe to the fire. We managed with a little persuasion to get the landlord to induce some of our fellow-travellers, who were strewn about the floor, to move to another place at the back of the inn. Travel brings one very strange bed-fellows, especially in Yünnan; pigs, ponies and men of all sorts and kinds. Later in the night an event occurred, which brought this amusingly to our notice. We made shift as best we might, had our dinner off the grease-covered table, sitting on the trestle and plank bed, and late at night, after doing some writing, turned in.

I was unable, as my custom is, to fall asleep at once and was startled to hear an exclamation of surprise and then a tremendous stampede in the dark close by me!

I started up, for thefts are not unknown in these hostelries. I could not understand it, but I heard a pig's grunt and the tin-chai anathematising somebody or something in very forcible language. The answer to an inquiry from me gave the cue to the whole business. A porker, smelling some savoury viands it would seem, had strolled upstairs and, not content with eating up the

Chinese cakes from one of our baskets, added insult to injury; for, having thus refreshed himself with supper, he betook himself to rest beside the tin-chai, on his bed of straw on the floor. Partial as the Chinaman is to this animal the close proximity of the porker was too much for the interpreter and was the cause of his violent wrath!

FAC-SIMILE OF A KNIFE-LIKE CHARM.

END OF VOLUME I.

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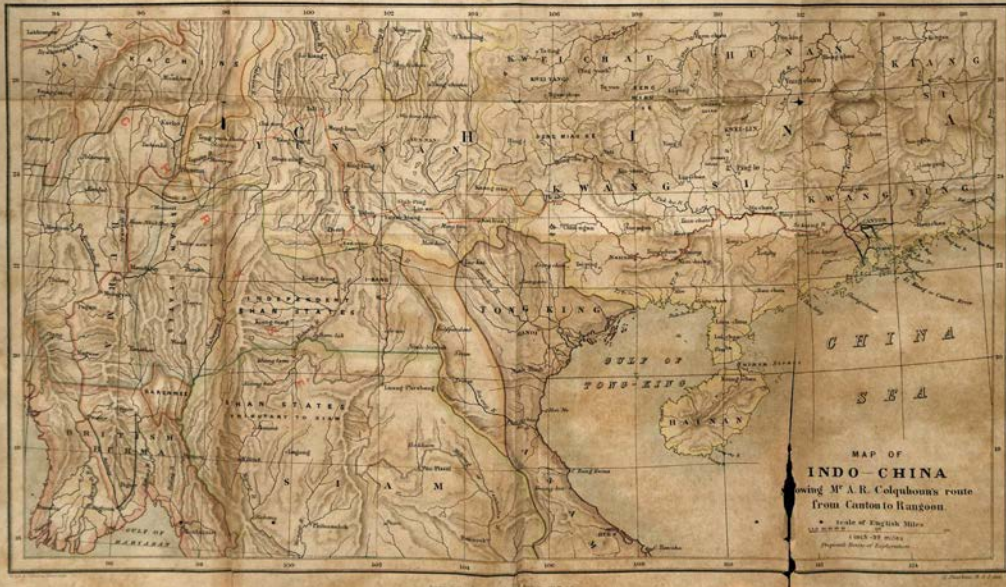
MAP OF
INDO-CHINA
owing Mr A. R. Colquhoun's route
from Canton to Rangoon.
Scale of English Miles
1 inch = 32 miles
Proposed Route of Exploration
CHINA
SEA
GULF OF
TONG-KING
HAINAN
TONG KING
KWANG SI
KWANG TUNG
KWEI CHAU
HUNAN
KIANG SI
YUNNAN
INDEPENDENT
SHAN STATES
SHAN STATES
TRIBUTARY TO SIAM
SIAM
BRITISH
BURMA
GULF OF
MARTABAN
BANGKOK
CANTON
KWEI-LIN
KWEI YANG
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I-BANG
HANOI
CHINA
SIAM

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